THE NEW CATALAN CINEMA: REGIONAL/NATIONAL FILM PRODUCTION IN A GLOBALISED CONTEXT

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Abstract

The thesis explores the post-millennial boom in the production of Catalan films. Previous critical work on Catalan cinema has tended to focus primarily on documentary and realist forms. The research presented here maintains an interest in documentary as a key mode but it also examines historical and fantasy-based feature film production as important aspects of what has been termed the 'New Catalan Cinema.' It places a series of Catalan films in the contexts of their production and reception, paying particular attention to developments in audio-visual industries and cultural policy that have taken place since 2000. Through this, the thesis demonstrates that the New Catalan Cinema challenges pre-existing critical conceptualisations of both national and regional film cultures.

The main question addressed by the thesis is 'In what ways has Catalan cinema consolidated a new identity in the 2000s?'. This has involved historical consideration of pre-2000 Catalan film culture. More explicitly, the thesis examines the main institutions that have supported the development of Catalan cinema since 2000, including educational (*Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Escola Superior de Cinema i Audiovisuals de Catalunya)* audiovisual (*MEDIA, Acadèmia del Cinema Català, Barcelona/Catalunya Film Commission),* governmental (*Departament de Cultura, Institució Català d'Empreses Culturals*) and cultural (*Institut Ramon Llull*). Additionally, it presents case study analyses of documentary, historical drama and horror as important areas within which regional, national and global crossovers and tensions are negotiated.

Contents

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Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee on 22/01/2014.

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 85,000 words.

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Date:

Introduction

The Gaudí Awards, organised by the Catalan Film Academy, were inaugurated in 2009 and replaced the Barcelona Cinema Awards that had been running since 2002. At the Gaudís, there are two awards for 'Best Catalan Film'. One is for 'Best Film in the Catalan Language' and one is for 'Best Film not in the Catalan Language', reflecting the bilingual status of Catalonia. In 2010, the winner of 'Best Film in the Catalan Language' was *Pa negre (Pan negro, Black Bread)* (Agustí Villaronga, 2010). Adapted from two Catalan-language novels by Emili Teixidor; *Retrat d'un assessi d'ocells* ('Portrait of a Bird Killer') (1988) and *Pa negre* (2003). *Pa negre* is set in rural Catalonia during the post-Civil War period and features both Catalan-speaking and Castilian-speaking characters. The director is Mallorcan, the cast and crew are mostly Catalan and Spanish, and it is produced by *Massa D'Or Produccions,* who are based in Barcelona. *Pa negre* therefore seems to function as what might appear to be a reasonably straightforward example of Catalan cinema. The winner of 'best film not in the Catalan language' in the same year was *Buried* (Rodrigo Cortés, 2010), an English-language suspense-thriller, in which a truck driver (Ryan Reynolds) finds himself buried alive in Iraq. The entire film takes place inside the coffin, filmed at the *Parc Audiovisual* in Terrassa. It is a co-production between Barcelona-based Versus Entertainment, USA-based The Safran Company and Dark Trick Films, in association with French company Studio 37. The director is Galician, the screenwriter American, and the cast and crew are international. *Buried* therefore represents a more complex example of Catalan cinema, which is much more transnational in scope.

The fact that *Pa negre* and *Buried* both won 'best film' at the 2010 awards, and indeed that two awards for 'Best Catalan Film' exist, suggests that straightforward understandings of Catalan cinema as that which is made in Catalonia and in the Catalan language obscures a large part of Catalan film production. The 2010 awards reveal that the term 'Catalan

cinema' encompasses films which appear Catalan, as *Pa negre* does, and North American, as *Buried* does. A cursory glance at the winners in other years shows that they can also appear Spanish, as in *Mientras Duermes* (*Sleep Tight*) (2011), the Spanish-language thriller directed by Jaume Balagueró that won 'best film not in the Catalan-language' in 2011. Furthermore, 'Catalan cinema' can also refer to multilingual productions such as *La plaga* (*The Plague*) (2013), a documentary about life on the edge of Barcelona that was the debut feature from Neus Ballús that won 'best film in the Catalan language' in 2014.

At the first ever Gaudi Awards in 2009, 'Best Film not in the Catalan Language' went to Woody Allen's internationally successful *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (2008) in which one of the protagonists, Vicky (Rebecca Hall), comes to Barcelona to conduct research for her 'Masters in Catalan Identity', but does not encounter the language, nor anything beyond the tourist attractions that Barcelona has to offer. In this sense it can hardly be read as 'Catalan' in terms of content. However, Barcelona City Council put forward vast amounts of money to attract Allen, who is open about this being the reason for which Barcelona was the main location (Montalt, 2008). Jaume Roures, the director of the Barcelona-based production company Mediapro who co-produced with The Weinstein Company on *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, states that one of the reasons behind producing this film was to reboot British and American tourism to Barcelona, and Spanish newspaper *La Vanguardia* later reflected on how it had been successful in doing so (Keeley, 2008; Ramos, 2009). Award-winning performances from Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, both of whom were building a presence in Hollywood at the time, ensure that *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is not just a transnational Catalan co-production in which Barcelona features almost as a character, it is also recognisably a Spanish film.

However, the tourist gaze that *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* casts over the Catalan capital city represents only one side of Barcelona after the 1992 Olympics. Other award-winning films, such as the internationally co-produced drama *Biutiful* (Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu, 2010)

and the Catalan-produced documentary *En construcción* ('Work in Progress') (José Luis Guerín, 2001) provide a critical engagement with Barcelona's new identity as a cosmopolitan, global city and as such a dialogue opens up within Catalan cinema that is specifically about Barcelona, rather than Catalonia as a whole.

Surveying the winners of the Gaudí Awards it becomes clear that the term 'Catalan cinema' cuts across regional, national and international borders. Therefore, this thesis will resist the temptation to examine only those films which appear as most authentically Catalan. Instead, it seeks to articulate that a complex and multifaceted Catalan film culture that encompasses and communicates an identity for Catalan cinema that is as much Spanish and international as it is Catalan, and which is complicated further by Barcelona's presence at the centre of this configuration. Although the idea of a Catalan cinema is inherently complex because of Catalonia's relationship to nation-state, increased co-productions in the 2000s boosted this small cinema's international presence as a centre of filmmaking and thus simultaneously complicated the idea of Catalan cinema further, whilst also confirming it as *a cinema*. The Gaudí awards were inaugurated after ten years of growth in the Catalan production sector, which was coupled with a slight increase in domestic audiences and a marked increase in international recognition that led to a renewal of Catalan cinema's identity. In addition to these contextual reasons, the thesis also explores textual changes and new trends in various modes of filmmaking that stem from activity at the turn of the millennium. For these reasons this thesis characterises Catalan cinema of the 2000s as 'New Catalan Cinema', as opposed to that which came before.

In the 1990s, Catalan cinema was characterised by individual films or filmmakers but there was no particular film industry to speak of. However, as of 2000, there was a sustained boom in production and exhibition figures. Between 1995 and 1999 Catalan productions only contributed between 1.4 and 1.9 per cent of all European productions. However, in 2000 this figure jumped to 2.9, and by 2010 Catalan productions constituted 7.8 per cent of

all European feature productions (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 37). During this time new governmental departments were set up and investment in the audio-visual sector, which had dropped in the 1990s, increased five-fold as of 2002 (Padrós Reig and López Sintas, 2005, p. 151). An industry consolidated around a number of new institutions such as the Academy and Catalan production companies increasingly co-produced with Europe and the USA.

In terms of critical success, Catalan films of the 2000s started to win more awards at festivals and began attracting academic attention. A proliferation of articles and chapters on certain films or aesthetic trends began to spring up in Catalan Studies, Iberian Studies, and Film Studies journals. Organisations dedicated to keeping track of Catalan films and their successes, such as *Catalan Films and TV* were set-up. They published industry e-publications such *Catalan! Films* in the English language, which functioned to attract international attention to the Catalan film industry. Furthermore, while in the 1990s there was almost no domestic audience for Catalan productions, between 2002 and 2011 the Catalan domestic audience grew by a fifth (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 110). This may seem insignificant, but occurring alongside a general decline in cinema attendance, and given the lack of a domestic audience for Catalan cinema previously, this suggests the development of a domestic audience.

Highlighting the problems that cinema in the Catalan language still faces on the big screen, a series of surveys conducted between 2008 and 2011 revealed that responses to 'language of the last film watched' demonstrated an increase in the spectators of Catalan-language cinema. However, that does not necessarily mean that they were Catalan productions in the Catalan-language, because imports dubbed in Catalan also increased during this time period, in line with policy changes (El Baròmetre de la comunicació i la cultura, 2011). In fact, the debate over whether Catalan cinema is that which is made in Catalonia or that which is in the Catalan language oscillates with increasing frequency between the two

definitions throughout the period under study; 1998-2015. Moments of agreement and disagreement between filmmakers, policymakers and audiences shape how this debate develops, as do wider socio-political changes.

An increasing volume of academic literature on Catalan cinema in the 2000s appeared, focused mainly on documentary and experimental cinema, such as the aforementioned *La plaga*. This is what Martí Olivella calls 'the New Documentary School' (Martí Olivella, 2011, p. 190). The aesthetics of the New Documentary are far from homogenous, but together have been studied variously as examples of 'neoneorealism' and 'auteur documentary' (Waintrop, 2006; Comas, 2010, p. 55). The overwhelming majority of new Catalan documentaries were multilingual productions, in a search for linguistic verisimilitude, and heavily influenced by New Wave cinemas of the 1960s, as well contemporary documentarians working around the world. Isaki Lacuesta, Marc Recha, and Mercedez Álvarez are among the most celebrated of the generation of directors that proliferate throughout the 2000s, and are held up as examples of the new aesthetic of Catalan art cinema. Martí Olivella summarises that 'Lacuesta, (influenced by Jordà, Guerín and Pere Portabella) would develop a transgeneric, migrant and poliglossic model of cinema which, along with minimalism, would become the four most identifiable traits of the new avant-garde Catalan cinema.' (Marti Olivella, 2014, p. 115).

As the Gaudí awards demonstrate, focusing solely on documentary or avant-garde cinema obscures a large amount of Catalan film production, so this thesis also considers the place of other modes of filmmaking in the complex framework within which New Catalan Cinema operates. Not only does New Catalan cinema cut across regional, national and international borders, but also different genres and modes of filmmaking. Comas writes that the three emergent genres of the New Catalan Cinema are auteur documentary, fantasy and animation (Comas, 2010, p. 55). Unfortunately, animation production slowed considerably with the economic crisis and production is still sporadic, so animation is not

considered in this thesis as central to the continued development of New Catalan Cinema. Writing in 2009, Comas does not acknowledge the place of historical drama, although perhaps this is because much of it was made after that date. However, historical dramas are a significant characteristic of New Catalan Cinema, especially as of 2006. In an attempt to provide a more nuanced account of New Catalan Cinema, this thesis covers three key modes of filmmaking that distinguish what might be termed New Catalan Cinema; documentary, historical drama, and horror.

> Though not a national cinema in the conventional sense [...] the multiple expressions of Catalanism in film nonetheless suggests to us something like a national cinema. While lacking a formal state apparatus through which to authenticate its 'nationhood', Catalan cinema is marked by a pattern of conceptualizations – shared cultural- historical traditions and textual coherencies across a significant body of texts over time- that in other contexts would lead us to consider it as a national cinema.
>
> (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 165)

Like many who write about Catalan cinema, D'Lugo focuses on textual aspects that can be seen to provide Catalan films with their Catalan identity. This thesis does examine documentary, historical drama and horror from a textual perspective, but rather than focusing on expressions of Catalanism, the textual analyses here focus on the nuances provided by Catalan cinema's position within a framework that is shifting and simultaneously local, regional, national and transnational. D'Lugo also observes that Catalan cinema is 'lacking a formal state apparatus through which to authenticate its nationhood' (ibid.). This may have been true at the time of writing in 2002, and about the Catalan cinema made between the 1970s and 1990s which he focuses on in that chapter. However, as is exemplified by the presence of a Film Academy and an Awards Ceremony in the latter half of the 2000s, New Catalan Cinema is marked by the development of a new framework of institutions and policies. As such, this thesis provides not just a textual analysis of a number of Catalan films in different genres and modes that are key to the identity of the New Catalan Cinema. It also examines the contexts of production,

exhibition and distribution that press upon these films and determine how they register the shifting framework within which the films operate as Catalan, Spanish, and transnational.

Martí Olivella speaks of a 'new Catalan cinematic idiom, conceived of as a micro-cinema, whose existence on the global screen seems to depend on its capacity to recreate Catalan cinema's own in-between and transnational location' (Martí Olivella, 2011, p. 203). This encapsulates the idea that the New Catalan Cinema sits at a juncture between the local and the global, and that its existence as both a Catalan and transnational cinema is dependent on this fact. The mutual dependence between the local and the global is a broad distinguishing feature of the New Catalan Cinema, as opposed to that which came beforehand, but it manifests differently in each mode of filmmaking, genre, and film. Documentaries that criticise the urban regeneration processes in Barcelona register a different configuration of local and transnational aspects to horror films made in the English language, and yet both can be described as hanging in this balance, textually and contextually. This thesis builds upon ideas of mutual dependency between the local and the global in New Catalan Cinema, as observed by Martí Olivella, and explores the nuances and subtleties of how this complexity manifests in different modes of filmmaking, genres, and films. A such, exploring the factors which led Quintana to summarise in 2014 that 'the indefinite nature of Catalan cinema is exactly what has come to define it' (Quintana, 2014, p. 11).

In summary, the New Catalan Cinema clearly cannot be discussed as a singular entity. Rather, it is more appropriate to try and understand it as a complex, multifaceted, heterogeneous cinema. Depending on the film it can be understood as Barcelonan, Catalan, Spanish, or as part of international genre or art cinemas, often seen to operate outside of geopolitical categories. For these reasons, studying the New Catalan Cinema has implications for the concept of national cinema and necessarily involves a consideration of the frameworks within which it operates, which means discussing it in relation to the

concept of national cinema. However, a sophisticated and complex approach to this concept is necessary in the case of the New Catalan Cinema because Catalonia is a nation that does not have its own state, but rather forms part of the larger Spanish nation-state. The New Catalan Cinema examined in this thesis coincides with a period of time when the concept of 'national cinema' is particularly contested for a number of reasons but particularly in light of the seemingly more appropriate concept of 'transnational cinema'. However, it also coincides with a period of time when Catalan nationalist sentiment in key institutions, whether intentionally or not, encourages the idea of a Catalan national cinema among Catalans and abroad. Thus, although the concept of national cinema may be viewed as generally outdated among film scholars, it still bears relevancy for key figures in Catalonia and therefore deserves revisiting with reference to this particular cinema, in order to understand to what extent the term retains currency.

In order to understand what facilitated the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema and how it developed, as well as how the Catalan language features in this cinema, this thesis pays considerable attention to the policies and institutions which support the New Catalan Cinema, and the modes of filmmaking that can be seen as something of a catalyst for this emergent cinema, namely documentary and horror. These modes of filmmaking are not always included in national cinema studies, but they are essential to understanding the New Catalan Cinema and its aforementioned 'in-between and transnational location'. In order to understand how New Catalan Cinema has developed, a consideration of the development of increasingly complex nationalist politics in Catalonia comes into play. The latter half of the period with which this thesis concerns itself coincides with a period of increased nationalist sentiment in Catalonia and Spain, and serves as a reminder that the development of Catalan cinema throughout history has been one of highs and lows, and one which aligns with the equally discontinuous development of Catalan nationhood. The critical interrogation of policies and institutions that support the New Catalan Cinema, as well as

the films produced within this time, are therefore framed against this background of this increased Catalan nationalism, given that 'the history of film and therefore film theory, must be seen in the light of the growth of nationalism' (Stam, 2000, p. 18).

The implications of New Catalan Cinema for the concept of national cinema are inherent, given Catalonia's relationship to nationhood and statehood. However, Catalonia's increasingly complex nationalist politics, that developed in the latter half of the 2000s, work to emphasise the complexity of the relationship between national cinema and nation-state. This thesis will show that as New Catalan Cinema increasingly thinks and acts as a national cinema in a globalised context, it prompts a consideration of the relevance of statehood for the concept of national cinema, especially in the context of Spain. Ultimately, this thesis is likely to produce a more nuanced and complex approach to thinking about the position of regional and national cinemas in international frameworks.

Chapter One

Literature Review: Catalan Cinema and the Concept of National Cinema

This literature review covers three broad areas that are relevant to studying Catalan cinema. Firstly, a discussion of the changing place of Catalan cinema in the literature on Spanish cinema reveals that it is usually, but not always, used to problematise the notion of a Spanish national cinema, suggesting that academic thought is heading towards the idea of Spanish national cinema as a what could be called a 'plurinational' cinema; a cinema of cinemas. Secondly, this review examines the growing body of literature on Catalan cinema itself, which is not preoccupied with the theorisation of national cinema. Rather, it is preoccupied with three main issues: narrating the history of Catalan cinema, analysing certain textual or linguistic characteristics and what they reveal about the context in which they were made, and analysing of the production, exhibition and distribution sectors. Thirdly, and in order to provide the necessary framework through which to consider the significance of the New Catalan Cinema, this chapter turns to literature on the concept of national cinema. It provides an overview of how the concept has been problematised thus far, and problematises it further through an analysis that reveals a persistent assumption that national cinemas are those which pertain to nation-states. Literature that reconceptualises the idea of national cinema in order to discuss the cinemas of non-nation states is also included in this section. However, although the concept of national cinema is separated from nation-state, the numerous differences between the 'small cinemas', some of which are of small nation-states, means that the concepts developed are still not applicable to New Catalan Cinema. Despite this, literature dealing with the concept of national cinema highlights a number of issues that must be considered when discussing Catalan cinema in relation to the concept of national cinema.

Catalan Cinema

Introducing *The Companion to Catalan Culture* (2011), Dominic Keown provides an apt summary of the state of Catalan cultural in Spanish Cultural Studies, which can be extended to describe the state of Catalan film within Spanish film studies.

> 'While all these volumes make a credible effort not to exclude the contributions of Catalonia to major features of the cultural life of the state, this area of interest never quite manages to sit comfortably within the parameters established. On occasions for example, the Catalan experience can find its way into mainstream deliberation only to disappear from view at other moments of equal significance. Elsewhere it seems to hang like an appendage which, despite the accuracy of the study, seems to be attached almost as an afterthought, vaguely confluent with the central thrust of the argument'
>
> (Keown, 2011, p. 1)

Barry Jordan and Mark Allinson's *Spanish Cinema; a Student's Guide* (2005) is a good example of Keown's observations. Jordan and Allinson are careful to ensure that the roles played by the historical nationalities such as Catalonia in the history of Spanish cinema are not simply assimilated and made invisible, and this can be seen throughout their history of Spanish cinema from the very beginning. Firstly, they state that 'the founder of Spanish film making was arguably the inventive Catalan cabinetmaker and photographer Fructuoso Gelabert (1874-1955) who, in 1897 built his own, hand-crafted version of the Lumière *cinématographe* in order to film the visit of the Spanish royal family to the Catalan Capital.' (Garcia Fernández 2002, p. 4 cited in Allinson & Jordan, 2005, p. 3). Secondly, in the sections addressing films of the late dictatorship they discuss the films of the so-called *escola de Barcelona* (Barcelona School) that develop 'an aesthetic in opposition to the *nuevo cine español* (New Spanish Cinema) and more in tune with French auteurs such as Godard', whilst reminding us that they did not 'seek in any way to represent Catalan realities or the Catalan nation and language' (Allinson and Jordan, 2005, p. 22). Thirdly, in the section on films of the Transition (1975-1981/2) they make reference to *La ciutat cremada* and *Victoria* (Antoni Ribas, 1976, 1983) as films that stage 'reengagement with

modern Catalan history' (Allinson and Jordan, 2005, p. 25). Lastly, in their discussion of alternative films to the official quality cinema promoted by socialist film policy between 1982-94 they acknowledge that 'well before Almodóvar arrived on the scene […] Bigas Luna was exploring sexual transgression fetishism and generic mixing' (Allinson and Jordan, 2005, p. 28).[1]

Jordan and Allinson's history of Spanish cinema is brief and functions as an introduction to Spanish cinema through authorship, genre, stars, representation, and film theory. Thus, despite their aforementioned efforts to include differentiation, the idea of Catalan cinema is missing at certain key points. Discussing the synchronisation of sound in Spanish cinema, they detail how the socio-political and economic context of depression and instability leading up to the Civil War delayed the synchronisation of sound in Spain. Despite the first sound studio being set up in Barcelona around the time that the Catalan language was officially standardised, studio production moved to Madrid just before the Civil War. The Franco dictatorship that followed, in which the Catalan language was largely prohibited from public use, meant that the synchronisation of sound was solely in the Castilian language until the 1960s when the Catalan language began to be heard in multilingual films such as *La piel quemada* ('Burnt skin') (Forn, 1967). The linguistic hegemony that was created influenced the perception of Spanish cinema as synchronous with the Castilian language that still resonates today. However, the hegemony of the Castilian language in Spanish cinema is absent from Jordan and Allinson's discussion of the synchronisation of sound. This demonstrates Keown's aforementioned observation that, 'the Catalan experience can find its way into mainstream deliberation only to disappear from view at other moments of equal significance' (Keown, 2011, p. 1)

[1] Josep Joan Bigas Luna is a Catalan auteur known for his 'Iberian Trilogy' of the early 1990s; *Jamón jamón* (*A Tale of Ham and Passion)* (1992), *Huevos de Oro (Golden Balls)*

Jordan and Morgan-Tamousnas' 1998 book *Contemporary Spanish Cinema* starts out by problematising the notion of a homogeneous Spanish National Cinema. They write that 'notions of nation, national culture, national identity, etc. are highly problematic in the case of Spain […] when the nation is in fact made up of four different linguistic identities (Castilian, Catalan, Basque, Galician), three 'historic' nationalisms (Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia) and seventeen autonomous communities' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 9). At the end of the book, their chapter 'Recuperating nationalist identities; film in the autonomous regions' covers Catalan, Basque, and Galician cinemas. They discuss the role of cinema in the recuperation of identity in these regions after Franco's death.

> The re-emergence of filmmaking in the Spanish regions since 1975 has been consistently problematic. Film output has been highly variable and irregular, both in quantity and quality. […] We find most cinematic activity in those regions which had the strongest film cultures and nationalist movements before these were supressed by Franco, i.e. Catalonia, the Basque Country and, to a much lesser extent, Galicia. In these so called 'historic nationalities', alongside other cultural activities, filmmaking would play an important though uneven role in the recovery of national identities through the reconstruction of nationalist consciousness and the affirmation of political and cultural difference.
>
> (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 157)

They provide an overview of Catalan Cinema from the 1970s until the 1990s, paying considerable attention to its role in the recuperation of Catalan national identity, the problems it faced as an industry seeking to grow, and the rise of independent filmmakers, as well as a guide to the major trends in different genres, literary adaptations, the *comedia catalana,* and auteur cinema. Thus, despite appearing as what Keown describes as an 'afterthought', this book is one example of serious consideration of Catalan cinema in Spanish film studies before 2000. Furthermore, Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas' observations on auteur cinema reframe Josep Joan Bigas Luna as a Catalan auteur rather than as a Spanish auteur, and contribute to reinserting Catalan film history into Spanish film history. In contrast to Celestino Deleyto's chapter in *Spanish Cinema; The Auteurist*

Tradition (Evans, 1999), where Luna's '*Trilogía Ibérica'* ('Iberian Trilogy') is understood as a musing on Post-Franco Spanish national identity, Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas consider it as a musing on Spanish national identit*ies*, in the plural. Deleyto's chapter on *Jamón jamón*, the first of the three films, contextualises the trilogy. Although alluding to a detectable Catalan-ness in *La teta i la lluna,* Bigas Luna is framed here as a Spanish auteur.

> The three films provide different but interconnected views on contemporary Spain: *Jamón jamón* is set in a rural area of Aragón, the central and longest part of the action of *Huevos de oro* / *Golden Balls* takes place among the skyscrapers of Benidorm, Spain's most popular tourist resort on the Mediterranean and the story of *La teta i la lluna* / *La teta y la luna* / *The Tit and the Moon* is situated in a little village in the autonomous region of Catalonia.
>
> (Deleyto, 1999, p. 270).

The trilogy may be labelled as 'Iberian' but the locations of these films were all part of the Kingdom of Aragón, the Catalan-speaking empire which Catalan historians view as the foundation on which Catalan claims for nation-hood are based (see: Balcells, 1991; Llobera, 2004; McRoberts, 2001). However, Deleyto's discussion of 'Spanishness' in *Jamón jamón* as part of the wider Iberian trilogy omits the complications of Spanishness that are provided by the presence of a Catalan perspective, exemplifying that in the literature on Spanish film, notions of Catalan cinema are marginalised. Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas redress this imbalance through an analysis of *La teta i la lluna* as a film that exaggerates the stereotypes of Catalan national culture just as the first two exaggerated stereotypes of Spanish national culture, with what Paul Julian Smith identifies as 'parodic intentions' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 174; Smith, 2000, p. 93).

The example of Bigas Luna and the *Trilogía Ibérica* thus serves as one example of the changeable and duplicitous nature of the 'Catalan' label on cultural products. In his book *Contemporary Spanish Culture; TV, Fashion, Art and Film* (2003), Paul Julian Smith observes that the Catalan aspect of many Spanish cultural products is often glossed over, writing that 'many of the dynamic examples of what is often held to be Spanish are

produced by the historic nationalities of the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia' (Smith, 2003, p. 2). Through emphasis on the spaces of crossover between the historical nationalities, the idea of Spain, and globalisation, Smith highlights the importance of a heterogeneous approach to Spanish cultural studies for ensuring that the cultural production in the historical nationalities is not simply assimilated into a homogeneous concept of 'Spanish'. His book includes chapters on the Mallorcan/Catalan/Spanish/Nomad artist Miquel Barceló, Basque conceptual artists, and the Catalan auteur Ventura Pons alongside chapters on Pedro Almodóvar, Spanish (and Galician) fashion chains, and Spanish state-wide television. In examining cultural practices at the intersection between autonomous region or historical nationality, the nation state, and global culture, Smith approaches Spanish culture as a collection of distinct but interlinked national cultures.

This approach echoes the tone of his earlier book, *The Moderns; Time, Space and Subjectivity in Contemporary Spanish Culture* (Smith, 2000) in which *La teta i la lluna* is interpreted as revealing 'an oblique response to Catalan nationalism', and the differences between Catalan and Spanish reception of this film are examined through reviews (Smith, 2000, p. 3). He notes that, 'whereas the Catalans were untroubled by Bigas Luna's parodic intentions […] Castilians either tended to erase the specificity of the film's Catalan setting or loftily to patronise the Catalan audience whose pretensions it was thought to mock' (Smith, 2000, p. 93). In highlighting the differing responses to Bigas Luna's parody of Catalan nationalism, Smith integrates the discussion of difference between Castilian culture and Catalan culture (as well as Basque culture) in a book on Spanish culture. The term 'Spanish' therefore becomes something of an umbrella term in Smith's work, and rather than signifying a homogeneous Spanish culture, it signifies a number of disparate but historically and culturally interwoven cultures that are part of the same nation state. However ideal this plurinational approach may seem for an updated approach to studying

the cultures of Spain, it must take into account that the Castilian culture is dominant and central, meaning that other cultures are framed as peripheral challenges to the idea of a homogenous Spanish national culture. As Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas point out, 'any notion of Spanish Cinema needs to take heterogeneity into account […although…] sensitivity to plurality and difference has to be set alongside the fact that Spanish Cinema may well be perceived by audience according to a very narrow and ideologically loaded range of national stereotypes and images' (Jordan & Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000, p. 5, 70).

A tendency to frame discussions of Spanish culture within a discourse of heterogeneity does not only involve including a proportionate amount of attention to the culture of the historical nationalities, but also the impact of globalisation. Thus, Spanish national culture is increasingly understood as pluralised from both inside and outside of the nation state. Among the publications to take this approach is the aforementioned book by Paul Julian Smith and Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas' *Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies* (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000), which is a development on their earlier *Contemporary Spanish Cinema* and includes three chapters on cinema, one of which focuses on redefining national identities in cinema. They write that 'it is becoming increasingly difficult to talk confidently anymore of a singular Spanish identity as such, as Spain becomes both globalised and internally fragmented through processes of political devolution' (Jordan & Morgan Tamosunas 2000, p.5). Their answer to getting a handle on such issues is to 'examine textual representations […because] forms of signification play a key role in the mediation and construction of Spanish identities and experience' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000, p. 5). This approach shapes the three chapters on Spanish cinema that they contribute to this book, all of which include an approximately proportionate amount of attention to Catalan cinema. Furthermore, despite their primary focus on textual representations, their chapter on the Spanish film industry in the 1980s and 1990s also pays attention to the autonomous regions and they point out that after 1996,

'whilst film production in Spain remains fundamentally fragmented, there are numerous signs of new production company formation, particularly in Catalonia with Prisma, Castelao and Barcelona AudioVisual, as well as Filmax/Sogedasa, a grouping which intends to specialise in the production of "*cine de terror*"' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000, p. 189).

Nancy Berthier and Jean Claude Seguin incorporate a consideration of the heterogeneous nature of the Spanish nation-state into the central argument of their book, *Cine, nación y nacionalidades en España* ('Cinema, Nation and Nationalities in Spain') (Berthier and Seguin, 2007). Their argument for a heterogeneous understanding of Spanish cinema is based on the fact that plurality is an increasing feature of Spanish film production and film studies. 'One of the most defining characteristics of our present situation, and that which was precisely the object of analysis at the symposium, is the diversification and increase of production and film studies in the Spanish nationalities and regions'(Berthier and Seguin, 2007, p. xii).[2] They expand on the complications that internal fragmentation and globalisation bring for studying Spanish national cinema(s), and why the examination of textual representations is important in unpicking questions of 'the national'.

> In Spain the problem of nationality is considerably more complex than in other countries. For this reason, it is worth bearing in mind that on the one hand the question of nation and/or peninsular nationalities that each have their own histories, cannot be resolved through a simplistic opposition between centre and periphery. Rather, it [Spain] almost constantly replaces the regional or autonomous nationality (with all the variables and nuances that drive the questions of 'Basque' cinema, 'Catalan' cinema) without qualifying Spanish cinema as that of 'Castilla y Leon'. […] A film is thus converted into an unstable site of difficult perception where questions of the national involve constant interference that discredits any analysis ignoring this diversity of nationalities. […] On the other hand, Spanish cinema […] can no longer be understood as disconnected from the rest of Europe [… and …] coproduction implies, of course, plurinational interweaving from both technical and artistic points of view which contributes to the erasing of limits and borders between nations and nationalities.
>
> (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, p. xvi)

[2] The book is based on the proceedings of a symposium of the same title held in June 2006 at Casa de Velázquez, the French public centre for research and artistic practice in Madrid.

Jo Labanyi and Tatjana Pavlović's *Companion to Spanish Cinema* (2013) adopts and significantly develops this approach to Spanish cinema through reframing the national from transnational and subnational perspective before proceeding to examine Spanish cinema through various frameworks including auteur studies, genre studies, star studies, aesthetics and sound, production and reception, non-fiction, and feminist and queer theory. In doing this, Labanyi and Pavlović recognise that the idea of a plurinational Spanish cinema has been present within the Spanish film industry since the transition, and cite the modification of the Ourense Film Week in 1976 to include '*cine de las nacionalidades y las regiones'* (Cinema of the regions and nationalities) as proof of this. They point out that at that event, 'filmmakers from Galicia, Catalonia, The Basque Country, Valencia and the Canary Islands published a joint manifesto in the four languages of the Spanish state, *Declaración de los cines nacionales* (Declaration on National Cinemas)'(Labanyi and Pavlović, 2013, p. 101).

Brad Epps' chapter, 'Echoes and Traces: Catalan Cinema or Cinema in Catalonia', presents an alternative to what Keown might call an 'appendage' chapter on Catalan cinema because rather than using Catalan cinema to problematise the idea of Spanish cinema, it explores the history of Catalan cinema in its own right (Keown, 2011, p. 1). Examining Catalan cinema from the 1940s to the present day, Epps deals with issues such as language and censorship in the Catalan context, and traces an auteur tradition within Catalan cinema history. Furthermore, and pertinent to the research presented in this thesis, he goes beyond textual analysis to incorporate a discussion of the industry in Barcelona.

> The fractured entity of Catalan cinema, dismissed by any number of critics writing, typically, from outside of Catalonia (and never in Catalan) and consigned over and over again, to a marginal position within larger projects on "Spanish Cinema". And yet, cinema in Spain, and hence, "Spanish Cinema", is inconceivable without Catalonia and, more specifically, without the industrial infrastructure that in the early twentieth century made Barcelona a veritable motor of cinematic production; placed it at the forefront of the transition from silence to sound, informed it, now and again as a site of aesthetic experimentation, academic inquiry, and political contestation; and rendered it, in short, the other capital of cinematic production in

> Spain- and all of this long before the political devolution that partly marked the passage from dictatorship to democracy.
>
> (Epps, 2013, p. 71)

Epps' chapter provides a brief history of the main issues in Catalan cinema and therefore cannot avoid examining the impact of state politics and film policy. This highlights that discussions of Catalan cinema automatically incorporate the heterogeneous approach to understanding national cinema that is just showing signs of development in Spanish film studies. However, this does not prevent 'closed' discussions of Catalan cinema being valuable. Catherine Fowler's *The European Cinema Reader* includes the chapter 'Catalan Cinema: Historical experience and cinematic practice' by Marvin D'Lugo, in which he discusses Catalan cinema as 'something like a national cinema' (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 163; Fowler, 2002). *The European Cinema Reader* was one of the earliest books to include Catalan Cinema into the discussion of European cinemas, but the fact that the chapter is based on research conducted in 1986-1987 highlights just exactly how fragmented attention to Catalan Cinema was at the time. Despite this, the points about Catalonia (or perhaps more specifically, Barcelona) as a 'bastion of a pluralistic Spain', and the idea that Catalonia is a 'creative frontier […] capable of revitalising the rest of Spain' chime with the literature in Spanish and Catalan cultural studies framing Barcelona as a centre of oppositional and avant-garde filmmaking in Spain (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 167). Framing the presence of Catalan cinema as a motive for considering Spanish cinema as plural also reflects in Epps' description of Barcelona as 'the other capital of cinematic production in Spain' suggesting consensus of opinion (D'Lugo, 2002; Epps, 2012).

Contrary to Epps' claims that Catalan cinema is never discussed in Catalonia or in Catalan, Jordan observes 'deeply-rooted traditions of writing on local/regional and national film history (by recognised film historians and commentators such as Caparrós Lera, Fanés, Gubern, García Fernández, Heredero, Martínez, Méndez-Leite, Monterde, Pérez Perucha,

Riambau, Sánchez Biosca, Torres, and Zunzunegui)' (Jordan, 2004, p. 64). This is especially reflected in *Cine español, una historia por autonomías* ('Spanish Cinema: A history by autonomous regions') which naturally features a chapter on Catalonia (Caparrós Lera, 1996; Ripoll, 1996). However Jordan summarises that in these volumes, 'we find little in the way of an analytically rigorous and chronologically comprehensive investigation' (Jordan, 2004, p. 64). This may seem a harsh criticism of some of key works on Spanish cinema that are incredibly useful for students and researchers and demonstrate an approach to Spanish cinema that acknowledges its inherent plurality. From a broader film history perspective, it is true that they tend not to deal directly with concepts of national cinema, but because many of these works accept that the autonomous regions and historical nationalities have their own film histories worthy of research, defining their relationship to the concept of national cinema is beside the point as it does not change their history or characteristics. In fact, documenting history and characteristics is the main aim of many of these publications. In addition to Jordan's list, there are a number of key works on Catalan cinema written in Catalonia, and sometimes in Catalan. Some key works are *El cine en Cataluña; Una aproximación histórica* (Cinema in Catalonia; a historical approach) (Caparrós Lera, 1993), *Història del Cinema a Catalunya 1895-1990* (A History of Cinema in Catalonia 1895-1990) (Porter Moix, 1992) and *Vint anys d'historia del cinema a Catalunya 1990-2009* (Twenty years of the history of cinema in Catalonia 1990-2009) (Comas, 2010). Although not directly relevant to the time period of this research project, *El cine en Cataluña; una approximación histórica* and *Història del cinema 1895-1990* track the development of Catalan cinema from its beginnings until the 1990s.

El cine en Cataluña… pays particular attention to the film *La ciutat cremada* (Ribas, 1976) through a chapter contributed by Antoni Rigol. Set between two decisive moments in the history of Catalonia and told through the eyes of one particular family, Rigol speculates with hindsight that the prolonged silence of the censors on how to deal with this film was

because they realised that they had before them 'a film that could only be the beginning of the recuperation of Catalan cinematography, but that could also become a symbol of the resurgence of Catalan nationalism' (Rigol, 1993, p. 93).[3] Indeed Rigol's chapter functions as much as a discussion of the historical events depicted as it does as an analysis of the role this film played in the revitalisation of *catalanist* sentiment in the Catalan-speaking areas of Spain, not yet autonomous communities at the time of release. The rest of the book examines: the origins of Catalan cinema during *la renaixança* ('The renaissance', mid-late 1800s, an important time for Catalan cultural, linguistic and political identity), an examination of the representations of Catalonia and the Catalans in Spanish cinema under Franco, and an interview with Josep Maria Forn, and a dictionary of directors in Catalonia. The dictionary element is something it has in common with *Vint anys de cinema a Catalunya*, and which the *Diccionari del cinema a Catalunya* (Dictionary of Catalan cinema) takes as its central purpose (Romaguera, 2005).

In *Història del Cinema a Catalunya 1895-1990* Porter i Moix identifies the roots of a number of aesthetic trends that can be seen to continue today. Set out chronologically, it contextualises Catalan cinema in terms of the landmarks in the development of cinema in general, as well as in terms of Spanish history and politics: The Primo de Rivera dictatorship, the Second Republic, the Civil War, the Dictatorship, the Transition to Democracy, and the first fifteen years of democracy. As such, it is an early and comprehensive guide to Catalan cinema that considers Catalan cinema as a cinema in its

[3] The decisive moments are the loss of Cuba (1899) and *La setmana tràgica* (the tragic week) of 1909 when the Spanish Army and working-class Catalans fought bitterly, resulting in thousands of exiles and military trials, hundreds of injuries and around 100 deaths. The dispute was over a Spanish royal decree that called for a disproportionate number of Catalan army reserves to fight in Melilla at a time when Catalonia was experiencing a cultural and linguistic renaissance and developing plans for independence. The decree was interpreted as unjust punishment for this by many Catalans and followed a series of assaults on Catalan cultural institutions by the Spanish army.

own right, and highlights issues key to understanding its textual and contextual history and characteristics.

The aim of *Vint anys de cinema a Catalunya 1990-2009* is to 'fill the gap that exists on the historiography of Catalan cinema at a global level since Miquel Porter i Moix finished his *Historia del cinema a Catalunya 1895-1990'* (Comas, 2010, p. 13). In the prologue, Caparrós Lera writes that since Romaguera's *Diccionari del cinema a Catalunya*, this is the first book to do anything to cover that gap. It addresses issues such as: how to define Catalan Cinema, the possibility of a Catalan 'star system', emerging genres and aesthetic tendencies, and the impact of the digital revolution. Furthermore, it also provides a panorama of the developments in industry and administration, followed by a detailed, year-by-year overview of the industry (including which laws were introduced and how they affected the industry), and a 'dictionary' section made up of a guide to individuals working in the Catalan film industry, as well as a summary of every feature-length production made within the time period, including figures pertaining to funding, budget, and box-office receipts. As such, *Vint anys de cinema a Catalunya 1990-2009* is invaluable for the study of contemporary Catalan cinema and is referenced throughout this thesis. Treating Catalan cinema as a national cinema without spending too much time on what this means for the concept of national cinema allows this book to deal with the history and characteristics. However, through sections that consider the complicated relationship of the Catalan language and Catalan cinema, and the question of whether or not culture should be subsidised, this book does engage with issues that are also pertinent to national cinema studies. How to define Catalan cinema is one such issue, but it is problematic given that the definition of Catalan cinema changes depending on whether or not the Catalan language is seen as an essential factor. As a result, Comas has to state his position in this debate, and he chooses the most all-encompassing definition.

> For this author, and for the purposes of this book, Catalan cinema is that which is produced or coproduced in Catalonia, and that which is made around the world by directors born or trained in Catalonia. This is not a particularly unusual opinion because other authors, the administration, and a large part of the industry are in total or partial agreement, even though often for different reasons and even though not everyone accepts this definition.
>
> (Comas, 2010, p. 21)

Since Comas' book, there have been increasing numbers of journal articles on specific Catalan films, trends or language(s) in a variety of modes and genres. 'Catalan Beauty and the Transnational Beast; Barcelona on Screen' from the aforementioned Deleyto (Deleyto and López, 2012) focuses on two opposing visions of Barcelona in transnational co-productions the tourist gaze in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Allen, 2008) and the 'dark underbelly' in *Biutiful* (Gonzalez Iñárritu, 2010). 'Historical Memory and Family Metaphor in Catalonia ' s New Documentary School' examines the thematic trend of dealing with the past in creative documentaries, especially the tendency to use Alzheimer's disease as a vehicle through which to articulate 'the long absence of historical discourse' (Martí Olivella, 2013). '*Bilingüsme i diglòsia al cinema català contemporani: El Colonel Macià (Josep Maria Forn) i Salvador (Manuel Huerga)*' ('Bilingualism and diglosia in contemporary Catalan cinema: El Colonel Macià (Josep Maria Forn) and Salvador (Manuel Huerga)') (Ugalde, 2011) examines the use of Catalan and Spanish in two historical dramas, focusing on how they are used to represent reality, and contextualising this within the history of the Catalan language in cinema. These articles highlight the variety of approaches to studying the characteristics of New Catalan Cinema, but, like the majority of others, they are not overly concerned with theorising Catalan cinema in relation to the concept of national cinema.

There are also, of course, books that address individual Catalan auteurs such as *Joaquin Jordá; la mirada lliure* (Manresa, 2006) which was part of a series released by Pòrtic publishing house that focuses on various auteurs and individuals in Catalan and Spanish cinema. Perhaps most interestingly is the significant number of books to examine

documentary filmmaking in Barcelona. Among these are a number of publications from Casimiro Torreiro, documentary selector at the Malaga Spanish film Festival since 2000. Among the books he has edited is *Realidad y creación en el cine de no-ficción (El documental catalán contemporáneo 1995-2010*). Furthermore, there are detailed analyses of the Masters in Creative documentary from which these documentaries sprang; the doctoral thesis *Mirar la realidad. Una aproximación al master de documental de la creación de la Universitat Pompeu Fabra (1997-2009)* (Comella Dorda, 2010) was developed into the book *Filmar a pie de aula; Quince años de experiencia docente en la Universidad* (Comella Dorda, 2013). Another doctoral thesis, *Renouveau du documentaire en Espagne et nouveau réalisme catalan: le Master en Documentaire de création de l'Université Pompeu Fabra (Barcelone)* (Castanon, 2011), demonstrates a widespread interest in the mechanisms behind the production of these films as well as the pedagogical methods used on this particular Masters in Creative Documentary.

Aside from this, extensive analytical reports on the state of the Catalan production and exhibition sectors are published regularly by Reinald Besalú, Frederic Guerrero, and Fermín Ciaurriz among others at the *Observatori de Produccio Audiovisual* (OPA), often with critical insight from Carlos José i Solsona (Besalú *et al.*, 2007, 2008; Ciaurriz *et al.*, 2007; Besalú, Guerrero and Ciaurriz, 2008; José i Solsona, 2008, 2013; Besalú, 2012). Sometimes these reports are developed into books, as can be seen with *La producció audiovisual a catalunya 2008-2009* (Gifreu and Corbella, 2010), and they provide the figures that expand on the 'regional reports' in *Variety* magazine that focus on Catalonia, written by John Hopewell and Emilio Mayorga (Hopewell and Mayorga, 2008, 2009; Mayorga and Hopewell, 2010, 2011; Hopewell, 2016). These publications demonstrate an increasing tendency to frame the films as Catalan, rather than Spanish. Subsequently, these articles, books and industry reports create a body of literature on Catalan cinema that

highlights an interest in the language and aesthetics of Catalan films, and the industry behind them.

However, although it is implied that Catalan cinema is 'something like a national cinema', labelling films as Catalan, or Catalan cinema as national, is not a major concern (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 163). In fact, Comas expresses surprise with those who seek to define Catalan cinema through a national cinemas framework when he writes that,

> It is surprising that certain sectors of Catalan society are so preoccupied with defining the nationality of Catalan films, always talking from artistic or cultural perspectives, as is done in literature or other artistic activities. In practice nationality should be an obsolete category in the globalised society in which we live, even more so in the world of cinema.
>
> (Comas, 2010, p. 22).

Quintana gives some explanation for why the concept of national cinema is not a primary concern in the literature on Catalan perspective from an aesthetic point of view in his chapter 'Madrid-Barcelona, dos modelos estéticos contrapuestos' (Madrid-Barcelona, two opposing aesthetic models) in Berthier and Seguin's aforementioned *Cine, nacion y nacionalidades en España* (Quintana, 2007). He writes that these new filmmakers working in Barcelona considered the identity debate to have been absorbed by television and forms of 'typically Catalan cinema' in which the local element is so overemphasised that the cinema is inaccessible to audiences outside of Catalonia. This leads him to propose that 'Barcelona has become a place where it is possible to make a different kind of cinema […] freed from industry and therefore more inclined towards avant-garde tendencies, whereas the cinema of Madrid remains convinced of the efficiency of formulas generated for commercial servitude' (Quintana, 2007, p. 144).

In fact, in many of these publications the slippage between *cinema català* (Catalan cinema) and *cinema barceloní*, (Barcelonan cinema) is often more pertinent than the issue of national cinema. Àngel Comas highlights that, 'although we are used to talking of *cinema*

català, it would be more accurate to say that we are talking of *cinema barceloní'* (Comas, 2010, p. 24). Quintana's chapter extends the observation that films made in Barcelona are textually different from those made in Madrid to examine the possible contextual reasons for this difference, through an historical overview of production models. He writes that in the early 2000s, the Spanish 'institutional model of making cinema that wishes to overcome postmodern pastiche through a return to realism […] had to accommodate an alternative model that had started to gain prestige in international markets' (Quintana, 2007, p. 141). This alternative model is what he calls '*cinemutante*' (mutant cinema) that was emerging from Barcelona, or more specifically, the Masters in Creative Documentary at the *Universitat Pompeu Fabra* (Quintana, 2007, pp. 141-144). His theorisation of Spanish cinema as a binary split between commercial cinema in Madrid and alternative cinema in Barcelona harks back to the '*Nuevo cine español* vs *l'Escola de Barcelona'* dichotomy of the 1960s and 1970s. 'The *Nuevo cine español* was accused of being too Castilian by young people in Barcelona, and the *Escola de Barcelona* was accused of being too elitist and of the *gauche divine'* (Quintana, 2007, p. 137).[4]

Mapping Madrid and Barcelona onto a trans historical and dichotomous framework of 'industry, genre, and popular film in Madrid' versus 'independent, experimental, and art film in Barcelona' may be useful at times, but Wheeler and Canet warn that 'this lends itself too easily to essentialist and nationalistic interpretations' and 'there is a risk of simply transferring cultural hegemony from one cultural centre Madrid, to another; Barcelona' (Wheeler, 2014, p. 17). Independent, experimental and art cinema are not the only modes of production in contemporary Barcelona, especially since major policy

[4] *Gauche divine* (divine left) is the term coined by journalist Joan de Segarra in 1967 to describe the children of the Catalan bourgeoisie who were artists and intellectuals with leftist ideals, lots of money, and an individualistic, pretentious air, parodied in Segarra's use of the French language to describe them (see: Torreiro and Riambau, 1999). They had a global outlook and were active in all areas of cultural production between 1967 and Franco's death, although sought alternatives to institutional support. Their influence on Catalan culture and the image of Barcelona is still tangible, and played to the 'general view of Barcelona throughout Spain as a place of liberal and liberated culture' (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 171).

changes on a Catalan level in the early 2000s. Yet, the efforts made in their book to include a discussion of the role of Catalan cinema in the contemporary Spanish cinema is confined to art cinema, ultimately adhering to the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy. Addressing the internationalisation of Spanish cinema, *Sexykiller, moriras por ella* (*Sexykiller, You'll Die for Her*) (Martí, 2008), *El Orfanato* (*The Orphanage*) (Bayona, 2007) and the *[·REC]* series (Balagueró and Plaza, 2007, 2009; Plaza, 2012; Balagueró, 2014) are discussed as examples of genre productions with global appeal, that are rooted in Spanish culture. However, the fact that they are all Catalan co-productions, or the significance this has for the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy, is not mentioned (Canet, 2014, pp. 45–46). Of the literature reviewed, only Rodriguez Ortega deals with the issue of double identities in Catalan-Spanish-international genre co-production, with reference to *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Allen, 2008) and *Tío Boonmee recuerda sus vidas pasadas* (*Uncle Boomlee who can remember his past lives*) (Weerasethakul, 2010), focusing on how cultural agents frame the nationality of these films differently depending on whether they are Catalan or Spanish (Rodríguez Ortega, 2015).

If Quintana's description of the cinemas of Barcelona and Madrid as having two opposing aesthetics was accurate at the time of writing in 2007, then a later article of his shows just how much cinema in Barcelona has changed since then. In 2014 he writes another article, taking a broad approach to New Catalan Cinema; '*Un cinema en trànsit per a un temps d'incertesa'* ('A cinema in transit for uncertain times') (Quintana, 2014). This time, he observes that a dichotomy between 'auteur cinema' and 'commercial cinema' has replaced the debate over whether or not language should be a defining factor (Quintana, 2014, p. 26). Now, the art/industry dichotomy is located within Barcelona itself, demonstrating that that the production of genre films is now on a large enough scale to disrupt the idea of Barcelona is a site of alternative filmmaking in opposition to Madrid. This in turn suggests that New Catalan Cinema is understood as having its own centres and peripheries.

Framing Barcelona and Madrid as polar opposites has become too simplistic a model for describing the relationship between these cinemas, and obscures a large amount of production in both places. However, it becomes more commonplace for describing politics during the time period covered by this thesis as the contemporary movement for independence gains support in Catalan government, and finds strong opposition in Spanish government. As such, we must be careful not to confuse the generally supportive atmosphere of creative and economic exchange that occurs between filmmaking professionals for the atmosphere of political opposition that surrounds them. By 2014 Catalan cinema may be well recognised as a cinema apart from Spanish cinema, but this does not mean that it is not part of Spanish cinema. José Sacristán uses his speech on accepting the award of 'best lead actor' for his role in *El muerto y ser feliz* (*The Dead Man and Being Happy)* (Rebollo, 2012) at the 2014 *Gaudí* awards to remind the audience, his peers, that although they may have different cinematic identities stemming from the *Nuevo cine español/Escola de Barcelona* dichotomy, the filmmaking communities in Barcelona and Madrid are better off sticking together as filmmakers in these times of political and economic instability.

> I receive this recognition not only as an actor, but also as a founding member of the Spanish Academy of Arts and Cinematographic Sciences. We need each other, every one of us. [applause…]. There are common enemies that we must overcome, outside and even inside of our professional field [applause]. And of course, in positions of… I was going to say 'responsibility' but it would be more appropriate to say 'irresponsibility', in central administration [applause…]. Every time that I have come to this… this place, to Barcelona, to work, or to any place in Catalonia, I have always felt at home. […] These last works of mine have been very involved. A kind of brave cinema that is free and takes risks. So thank you for your sensibilities as much for my last *Premi Sant Jordi* as for this marvellous *Gaudí.* Thank you very much. Let's fight on the same side!
>
> (Sacristán, 2014).

So far the literature review has demonstrated two main trends in the literature on Catalan cinema. In the literature on specific aspects of Catalan cinema the concept of a national cinema is not usually a primary issue. Rather, themes and characteristics, and/or particular

films are discussed in relation to ideas of Barcelonan, Catalan and transnational cinema. The second is that a tendency to gloss over the presence of Catalan cinema within discussions of Spanish cinema has been replaced with a tendency of using it to problematise notions of a Spanish national cinema by taking an approach to Spanish cinema that considers it plurinational. By 'plurinational' I mean that cinema in the nation state of Spain is beginning to be viewed as an amalgamation of smaller national cinemas located in the historical nationalities, and thus increasingly reflects the 'deeply-rooted traditions of writing on local/regional and national film history' that Jordan observes. However, we cannot escape that although the term 'Spain' and 'Spanish cinema' may be used as umbrella terms, they simultaneously refer to Castilian monolingual areas of Spain, and the cinema associated with this culture, made mostly in Madrid. This recalls Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas' statement that 'sensitivity to plurality and difference has to be set alongside the fact that Spanish Cinema may well be perceived by the audience according to a very narrow and ideologically loaded range of national stereotypes and images' (Jordan, 2000, p. 70). This has led to a tendency at odds with the trend for reconceptualising 'Spanish cinema' as a plural term, and that is to locate the term 'Spanish cinema' to Castilian-speaking Spain, thus separating it from Catalan, Basque, and Galician cinemas.

In a manner reminiscent of *Cine español: Una história por autonomías* (Caparrós Lera, 1996), Marie Soledad Rodriguez tries to understand Spanish cinema as that which is from the areas of Castilla la Mancha and Castilla y Leon: which would be called 'Castilian cinema' (Rodriguez, 2007). Ultimately, she concludes that because Castilla y Leon and Castilla la Mancha do not have their own national identity that differentiates them from the dominant 'Spanish' identity, ideas of Castilian cinema are arbitrary and superfluous. Nuria Triana-Toribio's *Spanish National Cinema* (2003) takes a similar approach, and views the cinemas of Spain as separate national cinemas with separate functions as national cinemas, and in doing so, removes the discussion of Catalan cinema from that of Spanish cinema. In

her introduction, she writes that Catalan and Basque cinemas are not within the parameters of the study because,

> To study those national cinemas in the same depth as the Spanish national cinema would require a three-volume book […and] I am equipped to trace the 'invented traditions' and enduring Myths of Spanish nationalism as they relate to cinema, but it must be left to someone more fully informed about Catalan and Basque myths of national identity to do the same for them'
>
> (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 12)

Triana Torbio accepts that Spanish cinema is plurinational and therefore that the term is increasingly becoming an umbrella term, but she chooses to use 'Spanish cinema' to refer only to the cinema of monolingual regions of Castilian-speaking Spain. Thus, removing those cinemas that make 'Spanish cinema' plurinational. She highlights that her omission of Catalan and Basque cinemas from the discussion of Spanish cinema was advised by a specialist in Catalan nationalism in order to 'go obstinately against the demands of Catalan nationalism to see Catalonia and its national identity and national cultural products differentiated from Spain and its national identity and national cultural products' (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 12). However, Barry Jordan writes in his review of this book that,

> this is arguably a pity, given that historically changing constructions of Spanish national cinema depend to some extent on marginalizing or suppressing the disruptive voices of 'other' regional or 'national' cinemas (including Galician, which the author does not deal with). Also, it is often difficult to disentangle film-making in the regions from 'national' film-making since, at least under Franco, both types were controlled by and depended on the state and were done mostly in Spanish.
>
> (Jordan, 2004, p. 65)

Catalan, Basque and Spanish cinemas and identities still do not operate in isolation. So, just as any discussion of Catalan cinema or identity necessarily involves the complications that arise from the position of Catalonia within Spain, discussions of Spanish cinema and identity should presumably involve the complications that arise from their existence within the constantly changing network of cinemas and identities that operate, under the umbrella term of 'Spanish cinema', whilst also acknowledging that one is dominant. At least, that

appears to be the main tendency in literature on Spanish cinema and cultural studies. Triana-Toribio does not want to legitimate Catalan nationalism by differentiating Catalan cinema from Spanish cinema, but she also wants to avoid the tendency to discuss Catalan films as if they were unproblematically Spanish, acknowledging that there are differences, as can be seen in her description of 90s trends.

> The autonomous communities have been promoting and financing films which present, in many cases, distinct traits and a few are shot in languages such as Basque (partly, as in the case of Arantxa Lazcano's *Urte Ilunak* (1993)) or Catalan (Boom, Boom (Rosa Vergés, 1990)) even while these Basque and Catalan National cinemas are often promoted in Europe as examples of Spanish cinema.
>
> (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 145)

The issue is perhaps that Triana-Toribio sets out to 'examine not only the inscription of Spanish identity in cinema, but also its inscription in the broad discursive apparatus that surrounds and supports cinema' (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 8). In terms of national identity, she draws on theories developed by Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawn and Benedict Anderson, and she views national identity as a constructed, rather than natural, identity. In terms of national cinema, she draws solely on Stephen Crofts' criticism of the concept of national cinema as that which is culturally different from Hollywood, which means that her focus is on popular Spanish cinema, narrative forms, and nation building. This differentiates her work from the preceding body of writing in Spanish cinema which tended towards auteur cinema and key works as was done in *Blood Cinema* (Kinder, 1993), and locates it within more modern analyses that include genre films and discussions of reception and audience. A such, it can be seen as a precursor to *Contemporary Spanish Cinema and Genre* (Ortega and Beck, 2008), *Spain on Screen: Developments in Contemporary Spanish Cinema* (Davies, 2011), and *Spanish Horror Film* (Lázaro-Reboll 2012).

Such books remind us that studying a national cinema involves examining not just the films favoured by the institutions, or that are perceived to 'address the national', but also

those which problematise, or even appear to ignore such issues. If the New Catalan Cinema in the 2010s is now characterised by an art/industry dichotomy as Quintana observes, then discussions of New Catalan Cinema should incorporate those films that are not explicitly Catalan. Transnational co-productions inherently challenge the concept of national cinema, but nonetheless they are a distinctive characteristic of the contemporary Catalan film industry. Furthermore, as Comas and others have pointed out it is often more appropriate to speak of a Barcelonan Cinema rather than a Catalan cinema, so exploring the New Catalan Cinema within a national cinemas framework involves an examination of what the idea of Barcelonan cinema means for the concept of Catalan cinema. Given these complications, insight on how to approach a critical interrogation of New Catalan Cinema can be gained from an analysis of literature on the concept of national cinema.

Catalan Cinema, National Cinema

As mentioned, a major concern in much of the Catalan film community is less about whether or not their cinema is national, and more about whether to define Catalan films on cultural and linguistic, or economic terms. This debate over whether cinema is culture or economy plays out in the development of Catalan cinema since 1975 and opinions have always differed over whether to define Catalan cinema as 'that which is in the Catalan language' (culture) or 'that which is made in Catalonia' (economy), generally known as the '*cine català o cine en català'* ('Catalan cinema or cinema *in* Catalan') debate. Furthermore, the idea that Barcelona and Madrid offer opposing aesthetic and industrial models has necessarily developed to examine the dichotomy between art and industry within Barcelona itself, which provides another angle to the debate over whether cinema is a cultural or economic product. Generally, these developments can be understood as reflecting the general art versus industry debate that characterised the GATT (General

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) renegotiations in 1993, summarised as follows by Thomas Elsaesser.

> The cinema, which celebrates its centenary, is both a French (Lumiere) and American (Edison) invention. A hundred years later, these two countries – as the GATT accords (or discords) have shown- are still locked in a struggle as to the definition of cinema- a cultural good and national heritage or a commodity that should be freely traded and open to competition.
>
> (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 36)

However, some writers do strive to conceptualise Catalan cinema in relation to concepts of national cinema. Barry Jordan describes Catalan cinema as a 'sub-national cultural entity' Marvin D'Lugo describes Catalan cinema as 'something like a national cinema' and Nuria Triana-Toribio describes Catalan cinema as a national cinema separate from the Spanish national cinema. Ian Christie and Labanyi and Pavolvic describe Catalan cinema as a 'regional cinema'. This is significant because the aim of this thesis is not to determine how Catalan cinema can be labelled in relation to the concept of national cinemas and therefore examine what that concept means for Catalan cinema, but rather to determine what Catalan cinema means for the concept of national cinema, and how it can be seen to problematie it further.

Perhaps the most in-depth exploration of Catalan cinema in relation to geopolitical categorisation is by Marsha Kinder. She uses Catalan cinema and television as an example of 'micro regionalism', based on her development of the argument for relativism in the use of terms such as 'regional' and 'national'.

> regionalism clearly may refer to geographic areas that are both smaller and larger than a nation. Thus, the terms "microregionalism" and "macroregionalism" help us to understand the regional/national/global interface. Most important, because micro- and macroregionalism function codependently, fluidly shifting meaning according to context, they thereby serve as an effective means both of asserting the subversive force of any marginal position and of destabilizing (or at least redefining) the hegemonic power of any center. Once regional structures and the "center" come to be seen as sliding signifiers, then there is a movement toward the proliferation and empowerment of new structural units both at the micro and macro levels.
>
> (Kinder, 1993, p. 389)

In taking this approach, Kinder's work chimes with the general tendency to focus on how the concept of national cinema is problematic in a globalised world and that all national cinemas are regional in the face of Hollywood (Kinder, 1993, p. 359). However, she assumes that a national cinema is that of a nation state, which is another example of how applying the concept of national cinema is problematic in the case of Catalan cinema. Aside from this though, the idea of 'Europe versus Hollywood' has produced two responses in film studies, to defend the national cinema against Hollywood, or to examine the transnational aspects of cinema. Describing the first, Tim Bergfelder writes that 'most studies of national cinemas in Europe (and in this reflecting the wider public consensus on and media representations of this topic) remain couched in a rhetoric of cultural protectionism and fear of globalisation, and they still perpetuate in many cases, whether unwittingly or not, the illusion of 'pure' and stable national cultures' (Bergfelder, 2005, p. 321). This is summarised elsewhere as 'an essentially commercial, free market and internationally oriented model against a culturally informed and state subsidised model' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 8).

Furthermore, Andrew Higson's revision of his influential 1989 article, 'The Concept of National Cinema', focuses instead on 'The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema' in light of the transnational, reprinted in Ezra and Rowdon's *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader* (Higson, 1989, 2000; Ezra and Rowden, 2006).

> It [national cinema] is clearly a helpful taxonomic labelling device, but the process of labelling in always to some degree tautologous, fetishizing the national rather than merely describing it. It thus erects boundaries between films produced in different nation-states although they may still have much in common. It may therefore obscure the degree of cultural diversity, exchange and interpretation that marks so much cinematic activity.
>
> (Higson, 2000, p. 16)

He goes on to incorporate the argument that the study of national cinemas should focus on the cinema watched by a nation, which in the case of European national cinemas is invariably Hollywood. He also points out that imagined communities are 'contingent, complex, in part fragmented, in part overlapping with other senses of identity and belonging that have more to do with generation, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, politics, or style than with nationality' (Higson, 2000, p. 17). This lead to the possibility for transnational imagined communities based on markers of identity other than nationality. Drawing on Anderson's equation of internationalisation with Americanisation, Paul Willemen expands on what he thought this meant for cinema in 2006. His explanation adheres to the conceptual model of 'Hollywood versus European national cinemas' already articulated by Kinder in 1993 and later given full academic attention by Thomas Elsaesser in his book *European Cinema; Face to face with Hollywood* (Elsaesser, 2005).

> The national popular is now equated with the consumption of US cultural exports, while critiques of such export products is stigmatised as elitist. At the same time, any film that is not English has become an example of 'world cinema', something reserved for intellectuals and other culture vultures.
>
> (Willemen, 2006, p. 29)

Willemen's statement is applicable if European national cinemas are understood as solely made up of auteur/art cinema models, but not if they are understood as complex arrangements of auteur/art cinema and popular genre cinema, and that both models are comprised of national productions and international co-productions. Furthermore, Willemen's statement does not take into account the reliance of European national cinemas on Hollywood blockbusters for continuing to attract audiences to cinemas, which Elsaesser calls, 'the gem of an argument that reverses the usual claim that Hollywood hegemony stifles national cinema, by maintaining that Hollywood's strong global market position is in fact the necessary condition for local or national diversity.' (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 17). In other words, 'without Hollywood there is no national exhibition sector' (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 39).

The dependency of national cinemas on Hollywood for keeping the infrastructure of cinema-going running is now generally accepted. In addition to this, it is also generally accepted that the traditional dichotomy of 'US cinema as a site of entertainment […] while other cinemas are sites of instruction or edification […] has been complicated by the fact that Hollywood has influenced cinematic traditions the world over'(Ezra and Rowden, 2006, p. 3). Certainly, Spanish cinema was revitalised through a generation of filmmakers who celebrated that they were influenced by Hollywood and in the context of postmodernity adapted certain stylistic traits associated with Hollywood (popular cinema) to the Spanish context in the 1990s. *Tesis* (Amenábar, 1996) is a film which characterises this shift and along with films by Álex de la Iglesia and Santiago Segura, 'initiated a leap in the formal quality of commercial Spanish cinema that ultimately served to reinvigorate a moribund industry' (Amago, 2013, p. 57).

The renewed popularity of genre productions in Spain in the 1990s brings into question the equation of Hollywood with popular film and the opposition of this with the idea that European national cinemas (or at least Spanish cinema) follows only an auteur or art model. As we have examined, a similar dichotomy is repeated within discussions of Spanish cinema, whereby Madrid is conceptualised as a site of popular film and Barcelona as a site of alternative filmmaking. This complicates the conceptualisation of Spanish cinema as a site of alternative filmmaking in the face of popular films in Hollywood, because that very dichotomy of popular versus alternative and cultural is repeated within the *nuevo cine español* versus *escola de Barcelona* debate that influences contemporary perceptions of Catalan and Spanish cinemas. Furthermore, it is now playing out within discussions of Catalan cinema as Barcelona becomes a centre for both avant-garde and genre filmmaking. It is clearly not as simple as equating genre with entertainment, and framing that as in opposition to 'national cinemas' as sites of education. In the foreword of *Contemporary*

Spanish Cinema and Genre (Ortega and Beck, 2008), Robert Sklar describes the crossover between 'national cinema' and 'genre'.

> The notion of national cinema is tied to the state, and that of genre to the market. Historically, governments have founded and financed film industries and institutions. They regulate, legislate, censor, permit or forbid films to be made or shown. It seems sensible to denote films under the sway of such aegis and power as constituting a nation's cinema. […] Similarly, genre as a marketing tool predated the advent of cinema, and was imported and elaborated in the new medium for its utility in classifying and diversifying films. […] It functions like a brand, evoking in the consumer familiar associations and tastes. […] Joined together, national cinema and genre can produce potent signifiers. Italian spaghetti westerns. Bollywood melodramas. Spanish Horror films.
>
> (Sklar, 2008)

If genre is tied to the market and national cinema to the state, complications arise when trying to conceptualise a cinema that is made up of both genre cinema and national cinema (which is presumed to refer to highbrow literary adaptations and national issue features), in a nation with no state of its own, but which belongs to a nation state with a distinct national cinema. Vitali and Willemen use a very contextual and economic argument to understand the links between genre and nation when they write that 'the notion of American cinema was the result of struggles, firstly to develop and unify a national market and, secondly, for some companies to achieve as close as possible to a monopoly within it' (Vitali and Willemen, 2006, p. 1). They expand that this involved 'creating regulations to achieve the rights to derive profits within a particular geographical region' and that it is the 'political dimension of similar economic developments that makes a cinema 'national'' (Vitali and Willemen, 2006, p. 1). Taking this argument to its extreme, they summarise that 'the products generated by such an economic sector are endowed with cultural nationality at a later stage, partly as a competitive move and partly for legitimizing such a move' (Vitali and Willemen, 2006, p. 1). Or, in Sklar's words, functioning like a brand. In Catalonia, where fiscal autonomy is minimal because taxation is administered centrally by the Spanish state government, creating regulations in order to derive profits is not possible.

However, the work of cultural institutions that promote Catalan films abroad such as the *Institut Ramon Llull,* do take genre films generated by an economic sector and endow them with cultural nationality as a way of promoting the idea of a Catalan national cinema, as do many national cinemas of nation states. Thus, the economic concept of national cinema is relevant in Catalonia, but complicated by lack of statehood.

Focusing more on textual analysis of genre and national cinema, Jordan writes that 'most European films are perceived as having a clear national identity promising certain textual, thematic and stylistic features, as well as specific cultural values,' and points out that English language audiences of foreign films are conditioned to expect certain things from certain countries. He writes that Spanish films are usually sold on the basis of auteur credentials (therefore limiting the range of films on offer), and 'promise visual flamboyance, provocative and subversive narratives and torrid images of hot, often explicit sexual activity' (Jordan, 2000, p. 71). This emphasises a very textual understanding of national cinema and suggests the study of 'genre auteurs' may be more applicable to Spanish cinema, which manifests in Triana-Toribio's framing of Álex de la Iglesia as a problematic Spanish national director based on his chosen mode of filmmaking and the fact that he is originally from the Basque Country (Triana-Toribio, 2014). The idea of genre auteurs in Catalan cinema could be applied to directors such as Jaume Balagueró, JA Bayona and Guillem Morales, but like many of those working in avant-garde formats, their influences are often foreign films, and they often direct English language co-productions, problematising them as Catalan national directors in any study of Catalan cinema that focuses on popular cinema. After all, their films circulate as international genre films, or are tagged as 'Spanish' rather than 'Catalan'.

In the face of such a complicated relationship between genre and national cinema that problematises the Hollywood versus European national cinemas debate, perhaps Elsaesser's description of national cinema as a 'floating designation, neither essentialist

nor constructivist, but more like something that hovers uncertainly over a film's "identity"' is relevant here (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 76). This is most relevant when considering the problematisation of the concept of national cinema from the transnational perspective. Not only do films cross borders in all stages of their life; production, exhibition and distribution, and audiences in Europe still primarily watch films made in the USA. In 2000 Higson suggests that 'the concept of transnational cinema may be a subtler means of describing cultural and economic formations that are rarely contained by national boundaries'(Higson, 2000, p. 15,16). Later, Ezra and Rowden summarise that 'key to transnationalism is the recognition of the decline of national sovereignty as a regulatory force in global coexistence.' (Ezra and Rowden, 2006, p. 1).

Despite this, the nation state, national identity and nationalism persist. Ezra and Rowden write that 'from a transnational perspective, nationalism is instead a canny dialogical partner whose voice often seems to be growing stronger at the very moment that its substance is fading away' (Ezra and Rowden, 2006, p. 4). Daya Thussu writes that 'despite exaggerated and premature obituaries of the nation state, it is fair to say that it is alive and well' (2009, p. 2). Citing Luisa Rivi, Temenuga Trifonova explores the reasons for which the idea of nation seems to be regaining currency as it is apparently being eroded by concepts of the transnational. 'For Rivi, the decline of Europe's master narratives does not mark their end; instead, these narratives are realised in declined ways, 'through the introduction and acceptance of concepts of plurality, alterity, difference, opaqueness, and heterogeneity' (Trifonova, 2011, p. 8). As demonstrated by the writers who conceptualise Spanish cinema as 'both globalised and internally fragmented', the notion of Spanish national cinema as pure and stable no longer holds much relevance (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000, p. 5). Rob Stone expands on the apparent disintegration of Spanish national cinema, explored earlier with reference to Smith, Berthier and Seguin, and Kinder, by pointing out that this questioning of the 'national' was based only partly on the

fractured nature of Spain. Key to this disintegration was also a 'new emphasis on transnationalism', manifest in the use of more global theoretical frameworks, such as genre and star studies, through which to examine film (Stone, 2017, p. 427).

In the first issue of *Transnational Cinemas*, Higbee and Lim consider how the subject of transnationalism, understood generally as an approach to theorising culture that focuses on the products of increased economic and social connectivity across state borders, has manifested in film studies. They put forward that this has happened in three different ways. One of these is to focus on diasporic, exilic and postcolonial cinemas as Hamid Naficy does, and pay attention to acute imbalances of power (Higbee and Lim, 2010, p. 9). Another is to examine the transnational as a regional phenomenon by looking at film cultures or cinemas that share a cultural heritage or cross a geopolitical boundary. However, they write that this could just as easily be called regional or supra-national (ibid.). More appropriate to this study is the approach taken by Higson, Crofts and others to see 'the national' as limiting, and use the transnational as a way of 'understanding cinema's relationship to the cultural and economic formations that are rarely contained within national boundaries' (ibid.).

The tendency for examining Spanish cinema as globalised and transnational involves examining the impact and significance on national cinemas of co-production schemes such as Ibermedia, which aims to create an 'Iberoamerican audiovisual space' through a co-production fund into which all member countries pay. As such, Ibermedia is a transnational constellation outside of Hollywood that was initially specific to the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking world, but has evolved into a European-Latin American cooperation, of which Italy is also a member. A key book on this topic is *Contemporary Hispanic Cinema; Interrogating the Transnational in Spanish and Latin American Film,* edited by Stephanie Dennison (2013). The book 'covers a number of viewpoints on the economic and cultural imperatives for transnational filmmaking, as well as the impact this has on

national cultures', and, 'frames the critical analysis of transatlantic co-productions within a discourse of power relations that complicates the basic assumption that neo-imperialism is always an underlying factor' (Allum, 2016, p. 188). In taking this approach, it reflects a development within transnational film studies that eschews the conceptual model of 'Hollywood versus European National Cinemas', as well as the idea that the concept of 'national cinema' have been replaced with 'transnational cinema' in which nations are no longer relevant.

The approach taken in Dennison's book reflects a development within transnational cinema studies that is more nuanced than simply considering the national cinema obsolete in the face of transnationalism. Chris Berry articulates this viewpoint, here paraphrased by Hjort and Petrie and worth quoting at length.

> First, while the onward march of economic globalization and free trade has eroded the idea of the nation-state as the primary actor within the world system, new nation states and national disputes continue to proliferate around the world, frequently stimulated by the very same processes of globalization. Second, in the context of cinema production in the growth of international co-productions and transnational networks of distribution and exhibition has cast doubt on the idea of national film industries as a paradigm; yet anxiety about local film production and film culture continues to inform policy, and national labels remain salient in the international marketing and understanding of particular films. Third, the emphasis on a more transnational perspective in cinema studies coexists with, and sometimes even articulates, an abiding interest in national phenomena that are sustained by the very forces that threaten them.
>
> (Berry and Farquhar, 2006 cited in Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 13)

The chapters of *Contemporary Hispanic Cinema; Interrogating the Transnational in Spanish and Latin American Film* may examine the significance and impact of the transnational on the national, but the nuances of national cinemas are not examined and their understanding of national cinema is equated with nation state, as was Marsha Kinder's. This is common in the literature on national cinemas as Higson, Willemen and Vitali, Ezra and Rowden and Bergfelder all do the same. Evidently this is problematic when it comes to discussing Spanish cinema as it is considered both globalised and

internally fragmented, which has led to the already-discussed increasing tendency to conceptualise Spanish cinema as a plurinational cinema.

Reflecting the tendency to examine Spanish cinema as internally fragmented, Jean Claude Seguín suggests that notions of Spanish national cinema have never been pure or stable.

> In a country incapable of producing a national model, and perhaps only capable of deconstructing itself into a puzzle of distinct and almost individual nationalities, cinema tends to look for models in other cinematographies. Spain is perhaps one of the few European countries that has not been able to identify itself through a particular genre or mode of production.
>
> (Seguin, 2007, p. 5)

It seems that as the concept of Spanish national cinema becomes increasingly problematic, the concept of Catalan national cinema (or the national cinemas of other historical nationalities) is increasingly relevant. Bergfelder goes some way towards explaining this when he observes that 'the national' is more pertinent that ever in minority nations and nations without states.

> The affirmation of the national appears to be more pronounced and urgent in countries which feel beleaguered in their political or cultural identity, and in countries which see themselves as either economically or culturally excluded or culturally independent from the developments of central and Western Europe.
>
> (Bergfelder, 2005, p. 319)

Smith adds that 'the weakening of frontiers and the dissolution of boundaries are often to be celebrated; but the critique of the nation state, however urgent, cannot be extended to nations without states such as Catalunya' (Smith, 2000, p. 91). Bergfelder's and Smith's statements suggest that despite its many problems, the concept of national cinema is still relevant in small national cinemas, which is an area of national cinema studies that may be more specifically useful for studying Catalan cinema. Susan Hayward and Ian Jarvie explicitly question the synonymy of national cinema and nation state in Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie's *Cinema and Nation* (Hayward, 2000; Hjort and MacKenzie, 2000). Considering the value, function, role, and importance of the concept of national cinema,

she questions it from a number of perspectives. 'The question is of course, why there is this need to reify a culture in such a way? Why is there the need to create a nation, a cultural community? And lastly, why is nation hyphenated to state?' (Hayward, 2000, p. 89). She answers this last question in part, but her answer still only applies to nation states, and is more related to the concept of national identity than national cinema, even though as we have seen, ideas of national cinema are always closely tied to national identity.

> By binding nation to state (literally by hyphenating it), the state has legitimate agency *over* and *of* the nation. Another closed, self-referential circle is born, therefore: the state is founded in the nation and the nation constituted by the state.
>
> (Hayward, 2000, p. 90)

Clearly, Hayward's description of the relationship between nation and state only applies to nation states. Her study of a national cinema begins with questions of national identity, and thus draws on theories of national identity to understand national cinema. However, Montserrat Guibernau points to 'the inability of [Anthony D] Smith's classical theory to establish a clear-cut distinction between the concepts of nation and state', as a possible reason for the reluctance to accept nations without states, and this clearly extends into the literature on national cinemas (Guibernau, 2004, p. 130). The link between national cinema and national identity is a theme common to most literature of national cinema and Michael Walsh explores the similarities and differences of approaches taken by Susan Hayward (1993), Andrew Higson (1989, 2000) and others in his article, 'National Cinema, National Imaginary'(Walsh, 1996). Ann Anagnost, cited in Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar's *China on Screen: Cinema and the National*, offers a particularly succinct explanation of cinema's role in the creation and maintenance of a national identity when she writes that, 'the nation is an impossible unity that must be narrated into being in both time and space, and the very impossibility of the nation as a unified subject means that this narrating activity is never final' (Berry and Farquhar, 2006, p. 6). Cinema is therefore also conceived as a tool through which to narrate the nation, a common interpretation of Benedict Anderson's idea

of the nation as an 'imagined community' in the literature on national cinemas, based on the transition that can be made from the print media that Anderson focuses on, to the screen (Walsh, 1996, p. 6).

In Catalonia, the narration of the nation depends on a framework of institutions that simultaneously inform and are informed by its narration and, 'the particular ways in which an economic sector's productive activities and a particular set of institutional networks known collectively as the state interact to mutual benefit give us the terms in which a film industry becomes a national one' (Vitali and Willemen, 2006, p. 2). In national cinema studies, nation may still equal state, but as Kathryn Crameri notes, 'Catalonia's cultural powers are fairly extensive compared with those that other non-federal states in Europe have granted to their regions. In some ways, the regional government functions as a kind of 'quasi-state', directly influencing the lives of residents and providing the primary point of reference in certain key areas of their daily experience'(Crameri, 2008, p. 7). This adds an extra-textual element to D'Lugo's statement that Catalan cinema is 'something like a national cinema', which is based on textual analysis of a range of different modes and genres. As Jarvie observes, 'most history of film uses the nation state as its primary organising category. If it were ever reasonable to take that category for granted, it is no longer' (Jarvie, 2000, p. 76). Catalan cinema, which can itself be understood as symbolic of the aforementioned internal fragmentation of Spanish cinema, is seen by some as a quasi-national cinema and this suggests it may also be worth examining through a transnational lens.

In their book *The Cinema of Small Nations* (2007) Mette Hjort and Duncan Petrie develop an approach to studying the national within the transnational that focuses on smaller national cinemas and the cinemas of nations without states. It is here that we find the most relevant concepts for theorising Catalan cinema in relation to the global context. They state that, 'there can be little doubt that film studies today requires models that go well beyond

conceptions of the nation as a monadic entity at most, perhaps in an unfortunate relationship with a single dominant other, Hollywood (2007, p. 2). Rather, they suggest 'a number of conceptual models for understanding the persistence of nation in various transnational constellations', and their particular interest is in smaller national cinemas (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 2). They suggest that although the

> intensification of Hollywood's direct participation in the production sectors of other national film industries [may have] generated a great deal of anxiety about the erosion of cultural difference and non-commercial filmmaking practices that might be eroded by acquiescence to Hollywood/American agenda, […] the international division of cultural labour can have the effect of boosting the international status and visibility of small players.
>
> (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 8,9)

While this may raise questions about the possible dissolution of the cultural specificity in such co-productions, effectively it suggests that because Hollywood productions do not discriminate between film industries based on their cultural or political weight, so decisions are made based on economic factors, and that industries with attractive subsidy systems will attract major transnational production with Hollywood, and thus gain international visibility. However, it is important to remember that transnational does not only involve Hollywood.

Discussing the benefits that Europeanisation has had for the visibility of Catalan cinema, Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas write that 'minority voices have increasingly turned away from the central state and the dominant national culture and now look to Europe for financial support and cultural legitimation' (2000, p. 71). Paul Julian Smith expands on the importance of globalisation of the local for minority cultures when he writes that 'it is precisely those distinct cultures (often invisible to outsiders […]) that, far from being parochial, may have the most global reach' (Smith, 2003, p. 2). While the participation of Hollywood in small cinemas, or increased co-production with other, larger cinemas outside of the nation state of Spain may increase the international visibility of productions, it is important to remember that international cultural exchange flows in two directions.

Furthermore, literature on Catalan cinema often focuses on its European outlook rather than links with Hollywood, perhaps because of the tendency to focus on auteur cinema as traditional national cinema studies do. This is emphasised by D'Lugo in his interpretation of *La teta i la lluna* as a parodic critical interrogation of *Catalanitat* (catalan-ness), particularly the desire to access the 'commercial space of transnational European Cinema' and thus develop as a 'creative frontier in Iberian social space' to lead the 'integration of Spain into Europe [a process in which] borders necessarily dissolve' (cited in Smith, 2000, p. 90).

Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas write that 'global culture thrives (and does its business) not on the basis of sameness, but on the strength of creating user differences and thus by incorporating and harnessing local tastes, preferences and habits' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 2000, p. 3). Rather than focusing only on how the local becomes globalised, they also place emphasis on how the global becomes localised. This chimes with Willemen's point that the universality of film language is an assumption [often] wrongly made, and that materials are always interpreted through the context of the viewer (Willemen, 2006, p. 33). Paul Julian Smith expands on the effects of this when discussing Ventura Pons' reinterpretation of US indie cinema, which 'has redefined independent cinema in the context of Catalonia; a nation without a state struggling to make its presence felt in the capital intensive field of feature production' (Smith, 2003, p. 4). Pons therefore has as much in common with the genre auteurs who are influenced by Hollywood as he does with other European auteurs, again suggesting that the Hollywood versus Europe framework is no longer applicable. In fact, Hjort and Petrie write that this conceptual model of Hollywood and European cinemas is no longer applicable after the 'neoliberal turn in world trade', so the idea of genre production and cultural cinema as in opposition to each other is no longer relevant (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 8,9).

Hjort and Petrie divide the category of 'small nations' into the following sub-categories, of which the cinemas included in their book are shown in square brackets; 'independent states with a population of between 4-10 million [Denmark], city states [Singapore], special administrative regions [Hong Kong], and sub-national entities with a significant degree of self-determination [Scotland]' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 5). Thus, they differentiate according to geo-political criteria and demonstrate the category of 'national cinema' is much more nuanced than it may first appear, and is not just problematised by the transnational, but also by internal fragmentation, as has long been observed in the study of Spanish cinema. Despite this, none of these categories are sufficiently nuanced for an accurate description of Catalan Cinema. The categories are on a scale, with the category closest to the pre-existing understanding of 'national cinema as that of a nation-state' at the top; 'independent states with a population of between 4 and 10 million', and that which comes closest to describing Catalan Cinema at the bottom; 'sub-national entity with a significant degree of self-determination'. However, the population of Catalonia is upwards of 7 million, and it cannot be described as 'sub-national' as it is even recognised as a historical nationality in the Spanish constitution. It is more of a nation without a state, or a nation within another nation state, meaning that rather than 'sub-national entity'; it could more accurately be described in Hjort and Petrie's framework as 'sub-state nation with a significant degree of self-determination'.

In *Reconceptualising National Cinemas* (2006), Stephen Crofts also attempts to disassociate the idea of national cinema from nation state. He proposes that there are seven varieties of national cinema, differentiated by their position in the National Cinema/Hollywood paradigm. The seventh category, and by his reasoning therefore the least familiar to the readership, is 'regional or national cinemas whose culture and/or language take their distance from the nation states which enclose them' (Crofts, 2006, p. 44). Here, Crofts is explicitly stating that national cinemas need not be from a nation-state.

However, by setting up regional or national cinemas using a discourse of difference from the nation state, he ascribes to the aforementioned 'polarising' tendency in some of the literature describing the relationship between Catalan and Spanish cinema as located in 'art-house' Barcelona and 'genre' Madrid (see: Epps 2013, Quintana, 2007, Triana-Toribio 2003). Importantly though, Crofts notes that the categories are also highly permeable, and so although Catalan cinema may appear to be firmly in the seventh category, many Catalan films could also be included in the first; 'cinemas which differ from Hollywood, but do not compete directly, by targeting a distinct, specialist market sector', and the third; 'European and Third World entertainment cinemas which struggle against Hollywood with limited or no success' (Crofts, 2006). Rather than differentiating national cinemas based on a geo-political framework as Hjort and Petrie do, Crofts does so based on economic and cultural factors, reminding us that national cinemas can be defined in a number of different ways: geographically, politically, culturally and economically.

Hjort, Petrie, and Crofts demonstrate possible conceptual models for discussing the cinema of small nations within the transnational context, but in the case of New Catalan Cinema, assigning it to their categories becomes difficult. It does not fit Hjort and Petrie's geo-political framework, nor does it sit neatly in the cultural and economic categories that Crofts suggests. To some extent it takes its distance from the nation state enclosing it, but it also contributes to the cinema of that nation state, just as cinema of the nation state contributes to it in return. So, although these texts bring the discussion of cinemas not belonging to a nation-state into the discussion of national cinemas, the predominant understanding of national cinema is still tied to the idea of nation-as-state. These works were published in 2006 and 2007, but as demonstrated in this literature review, the idea of a homogenous Spanish national cinema has been challenged since the early 1990s in a number of ways, often using the presence of Catalan cinema to do so. In summary, in national film studies ideas of the 'national' move away from 'identity' and towards

‘economy’ just as in Catalan film studies there is a tendency to focus on textual coherencies and identity-based definitions; one side of the dichotomy between auteur cinema and industrial cinema that Quintana observes (Quintana, 2014, p. 12).

Almost in opposition to trends for moving from national to transnational, the body of literature examining textual and thematic aspects of Catalan cinema represents a search for coherency among Catalan films and suggests a desire to find a pure and stable notion of Catalan national cinema. Any coherency often turns out to be genre hybridity and multilingualism, and this is often justified as a distinctly Catalan characteristic, because Catalonia is itself bilingual and located between the regional, the national and the global, being as it is a nation without a state in a globalised world. For example, Martí Olivella characterises the new avant-garde Catalan cinema as ‘transgeneric, migrant, and poliglossic’ and observes that this resonates with the sociopolitical and geographical context of these filmmakers (Marti Olivella, 2014, p. 115). The synchronicity of thematic and/or textual characteristics with geographical and sociopolitical context catches our attention as scholars interested in the links between cinema and society. However, to avoid essentialist arguments, a thorough analysis of the contextual reasons for which coherent textual characteristics appear in New Catalan Cinema is necessary when using an updated national cinemas approach. By examining the mechanisms of the film industry, we gain a more grounded understanding of the reasons for which some films may register the wider sociopolitical and geographical characteristics of the context in which they are made.

The fact that the literature on Catalan cinema focuses mainly on documentary and avant-garde forms of cinema is problematic because a significant proportion of the New Catalan Cinema is made up of genre cinema. Framing Barcelona as the centre of art cinema only serves to feed the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy, creating a false hegemony that obscures the forms of cinema, that perhaps because of this dichotomy, are written about as Spanish films or transnational genre productions. These films provide an entry into discussions

about dual modes of address and the transnational side of the New Catalan Cinema, which is as important for understanding its history, characteristics and significance as 'pure' Catalan productions – those produced, financed, and made in Catalonia and dealing with Catalan subject matter, or in the Catalan language. The issue of language and the question of whether Catalan cinema is that which is in the Catalan language or that which is made in Catalonia is highlighted as an issue worth investigating further, as is the issue of whether Catalan cinema should really be called Barcelonan Cinema.

The changing place of Catalan Cinema in the literature on Spanish cinema serves to highlight that it is used in various ways to problematise notions of a Spanish national cinema, either by suggesting that the term Spanish cinema is an umbrella term for a plurinational cinema made of smaller national cinemas, of which Catalan is one. Or, that the term should only refer to Castilian language cinema made in areas of Spain closer to the Castilian culture. Of course, both of these reconceptualisations of 'Spanish cinema' are problematic because Spanish cinema is that of the nation-state of Spain, whereas Catalan, Basque and Galician cinemas belong to minority nations, or 'historical nationalities' according to the Spanish constitution, meaning that the Spanish cinema in either reconceptualisation is dominant. Part of the problem with reconceptualising Spanish and Catalan cinemas in relation to the concept of national cinema is that national cinema is invariably linked to the nation state. Even in the literature on small cinemas, where a concerted effort is made to acknowledge that cinemas of stateless nations functions as a national cinema for that area, the cinemas of nation states are framed as something which these cinemas frame themselves in opposition to, as in the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy.

The literature review suggests that an approach to studying the New Catalan Cinema in relation to the concept of national cinema would be to study a variety of genres and modes of filmmaking within a culturally specific context and industrial framework that is shaped by Catalan, Spanish and international institutions, policies, and markets. This allows for a

more accurate portrayal of the New Catalan Cinema and a thorough exploration of the issues brought up in the literature review, the place of language, the Barcelona question, the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy, and the ways in which films register the Catalan, Spanish and transnational context of production. This thesis focuses mainly on production, but questions of exhibition, audience, are included throughout in order to support or complicate these issues.

Research Questions and Methodology

The literature review reveals that conceptual models for studying cinema in relation to geopolitical concepts such as regional, national and transnational are changing and are often in direct conflict. Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar propose a model for studying national cinemas that incorporates and encompasses all of the varying approaches. Drawing on the fact that the national remains a relevant frame of reference within film studies, they approach the national in Chinese cinema as 'contested and construed in different ways […] to be understood within an analytic approach that focuses on cinema and the national as a framework within which to consider a range of questions and issues about the national' (Berry and Farquhar, 2006, p. 2).

> We argue for the abandonment of the national cinemas approach and its replacement with a larger analytic framework of cinema and the national. Instead of taking the national for granted as something known and unproblematic –as the older national cinemas model tended to-our larger analytic framework puts the problem of what the national is-how it is constructed, maintained, and challenged-at the centre. […] The rethinking of the nation and the national in a general sense has produced a very large body of literature. However, three major outcomes are especially relevant […]. First, the nation-state is not universal and trans historical, but socially and historically located form of community with origins in post-Enlightenment Europe […] Second, if this form of community appears fixed, unified, and coherent, then that is an effect that is produced by the suppression of internal difference and blurred boundaries. Third, producing this effect of fixity, coherence and unity depends on the establishment and recitation of stories and images – the nation exists to some extent because it is narrated.
>
> (Berry and Farquhar, 2006, p. 5,6)

This thesis adheres to Berry and Farquhar's call for the study of cinemas in their national context to move away from the often taxonomic national cinemas approach. As is demonstrated by an exploration of the literature on small national cinemas, Catalan cinema problematises any overarching system of categorisation for those national cinemas that do not belong to nation states, and, much like in the literature on Catalan cinema, developing the correct label is not of interest. Rather, this thesis approaches the New Catalan cinema using a larger analytic framework of cinema and the national in order to produce a critical interrogation of cinema in Catalonia. It takes into account that Catalan cinema is already considered a national cinema by those who write about it, and that like Spanish cinema it can be understood as characterised by both internal fragmentation and globalisation. Thus, through studying the history and characteristics of the New Catalan Cinema, the thesis assesses what it may mean for the concept of national cinema in terms of further problematisation.

Berry and Farquhar's 'analytic framework of cinema and the national' may appear to focus on the narration of nation within the films themselves, but, as discussed, the field of national cinema studies now conceptualises 'national cinema' as a site of crossover between different modes of filmmaking, a balance of production and audience studies, and indeed, different national formations. Updated studies of any national cinemas must take heed of the other ways in which the concept of national cinema has been problematised in the past, namely based on a lack of attention to genre production and audiences. Furthermore, any considerations of Catalan cinema as a national cinema need to acknowledge that as the cinema of a nation without a state, any consideration of the contextual framework must take into account that Catalan cinema operates within a changing set of overlapping systems of government and markets.

> We do need national cinemas histories that are grounded in the study of diverse audiences and reception within the nations that are still our primary frames of reference; and these should give due weight to indigenous production where and

> when this is significant, as well as factoring in the prevailing economic and political framework.
>
> (Christie, 2013, p. 28).

Christie's article in *Film History,* in which he uses Catalan cinema as an example of a regional cinema having the presence of a national cinema on the international stage, highlights the need for a study such as this, and prompts a consideration of its main purpose: to examine the history, characteristics and significance of the New Catalan Cinema. Using an updated concept of national cinema through which to examine the New Catalan Cinema, which includes a consideration of genre, audiences, and the transnational aspects of cinema, the thesis is able to map the New Catalan Cinema on to overlapping Catalan, Spanish and transnational frameworks. In doing so, this thesis contributes one specific case study to the field of film history that is reconsidering the concept of national cinema in light of the development of those cinemas that do not belong to nation states. Secondarily, it also contributes to the growing body of literature on Catalan Cinema, and by considering the New Catalan Cinema in relation to the concept of national cinema, locates it relation to film history more generally. Furthermore, as a detailed examination of the cinema of one of Spain's autonomous regions and historical nationalities, it provokes an alternative perspective on the concept of Spanish national cinema, one that emphasises that it is inherently 'plurinational' i.e. a national cinema made up of national cinemas. In order to achieve these aims, the research is driven by a set of research questions that provide the objectives of the thesis; to explore the history, characteristics and significance of the New Catalan Cinema.

- What facilitated the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, and how has it developed since then?
- What are the textual and contextual features of the New Catalan Cinema?
- How does the Catalan language feature in the New Catalan Cinema?

- What are the implications of a revised understanding of New Catalan Cinema for a broader understanding of notions of film cultures?

Answering these questions involves examining a number of different aspects of the New Catalan Cinema. The introduction and literature review have given some indications of how and when the New Catalan Cinema can be seen to have started, but chapters two and three explore this in much more detail, and thus primarily address the first research question. Chapter two focuses mainly on the context that facilitated the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, examining the institutions and policies in the socio-political context. Chapter three focuses specifically on three films that kick started the documentary mode, which gave rise to the 'transgeneric, migrant and poliglossic' characteristics associated with the more avant-garde forms of the New Catalan Cinema. The introduction and literature review have also provided an overview of the main characteristics: the 'Catalan cinema or Cinema in Catalan' debate, the fact that the New Catalan Cinema is made up of documentary and genre cinema, the issue of whether or not it should really be called *cinema barceloní*, and the fact that transnationalism has been central to its growth. These issues lend structure to chapter four, five and six. Chapter four examines creative documentaries that represent one kind of *cinema barceloní*, chapter five examines historical dramas and nation building that address a Catalan national audience, and chapter six examines the horror genre as a vehicle for accessing the international genre markets.

In chapter two, an investigation of the institutions and policies that influence and are influenced by Catalan cinema reveals that the New Catalan Cinema develops and changes in line with a changing socio-political context which is directly related to changing ideas of Catalan nationality, and as such, the definition of Catalan cinema. The discussion of policy is framed around an analysis of the aforementioned 'cine català o cine *en* català' debate which changes according to the social, historical and political climate. This debate affects and is affected by changes in policy, and some significant changes in the late 1990s and

throughout the 2000s provide a broad framework within which to understand the films of later chapters. The role of educational and cinematic institutions in the creation and maintenance of the New Catalan Cinema is also addressed in chapter two, providing necessary contextual information for chapter three.

In chapter three, the beginning of the creative documentary strand of the New Catalan Cinema is explored. The three feature documentaries that mark this are *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* ('Buenaventura Durrutti, anarchist') (Comolli, 1999), *Mones com la Becky* (*Monos como Becky,* 'Monkeys like Becky') (Jordà, 1999) and *En construcción* (Work in Progress*)* (Guerín, 2001). *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción* are now held up as examples of documentary innovation in Catalonia, Spain, and the world, and so a chapter devoted to exploring this seems necessary. All three films are discussed in terms of their contribution to the aesthetic of later creative documentaries, in order to understand how this much heralded aesthetic came about.

As the decade went on, documentary cinema proliferated, the aesthetic developed in different directions and a number of themes were addressed. In chapter four, *De nens* and *Ciutat morta* are discussed in terms of their developments on the politically self-reflexive mode of filmmaking. *El taxista ful* and *La plaga* are discussed in terms of their developments on the incorporation of fiction. However, together these four films develop on a major theme that was first addressed in *En Construcción*, and which engages with the idea of a *cinema barceloní;* the city of Barcelona and its ongoing regeneration as a global city.

The socio-political context in the mid-2000s is shaped largely by the movement for the recuperation of historical memory in Spain, and the law of democratic memory in Catalonia. In the context of recovering historical memory and increased support for Catalan language and content in film from both Catalan and Spanish governments means

that Catalan historical dramas begin to appear. Chapter five examines a number of films of different genres that interact with the historical drama in an effect that can be understood as nation-building and are therefore more obvious examples of a Catalan national cinema that articulates and later questions how the myth of Catalan national identity is constructed. *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre* are discussed as biopics of former Catalan presidents constructed as national heroes at a time when the narration of Catalan history focuses on the losers. *Salvador (Puig Antich)* and *Fènix 11.23* are discussed as examples of the personalising national identity and bring history into contact with the present, as well as blurring Leftist and Catalanist rhetoric. *Bruc la llegenda* may be a historical action film, but it can also be understood as mythologising the Catalan identity as natural through its use of language, landscape and metaphor. *Pa negre* is an example of a film which questions the dominant narratives of Catalan national identity at the time, and in doing so becomes a film of national significance.

Like documentary, horror is present thought the time period in question and can be seen to have different stages. Also like documentary, 1998 is marked as the beginning of the New Catalan Horror. As mostly co-productions in the English language that appealed to a global audience of horror fans, these films would pre-empt the films that would be made after Fantastic Factory ended, by the creative and technical staff that worked on those films. Thus, Catalan horror films are not Barcelonan in content, as are documentaries, nor are they Catalan in content, as are historical dramas. Rather they have a dual mode of address. They are global in their appeal to genre conventions but can also be culturally specific and this play between globally appealing tropes and aesthetics and an underlying culturally specific reading is interesting. Thus, chapter six explores the REC series in terms of its global appeal, which is, incidentally, almost entirely linked to its documentary aesthetic. It also pays a great deal of attention to a secondary and culturally specific reading of the series as a critical observation about the effects of the movement for the recuperation of

historical memory on contemporary Spanish and Catalan society. As such, the REC films are viewed of as primarily global products, but with tangible Catalan and Spanish accents.

Of course this thesis cannot be considered a comprehensive account of the New Catalan Cinema as auteur cinema, melodrama and animation are conspicuously absent. However, auteur cinema and local-themed melodramas did not undergo such radical textual and contextual changes, as did documentary, historical drama and horror. So, although some auteur films and melodramas are included where relevant to the central discussion of Catalan Cinema's new identity in each chapter, they are not given chapters of their own. Animation, although it enjoyed a period of growth, suffered greatly after the economic crisis, so although when Comas wrote in 2009 that the emergent genres of Catalan cinema are documentary, fantasy and animation, only documentary and fantasy have managed to weather the storm

The relatively broad scope of this thesis confirms that Catalan cinema can no longer be appendage chapter in a book on Spanish cinema, and demonstrates that geopolitical dichotomies between Catalonia and Spain, Barcelona and Madrid, Catalonia and Barcelona are much more complex than they may first appear. Furthermore, those dichotomies between art and genre cinema, or Hollywood and European National cinemas (however that term is understood) are not always applicable. Most obviously perhaps, this thesis demonstrates that the New Catalan Cinema is anything but hegemonic. Indeed, an appraisal of New Catalan Cinema reveals that notions of the national, the sub-national or regional, and the transnational are not readily separable, and that this has implications for an understanding of what a national film culture, or cultures, actually is.

Chapter Two

Policies and Institutions; Constructing the New Catalan Cinema

The literature review highlights a need for the detailed examination of institutions and policies in any examination of cinema within a national cinemas framework. Firstly, there is Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar's call for replacing the national cinemas approach with an approach to 'cinema and the national'. They emphasise that, 'Instead of taking the national for granted as something known and unproblematic – as the older national cinemas model tended to – our larger analytic framework puts the problem of what the national is – how it is constructed, maintained, and challenged-at the centre.'(Berry and Farquhar, 2006, p. 5). This chapter specifically examines the mechanisms that are behind the construction of the New Catalan Cinema, and puts the question of how it is constructed, maintained and challenged, at the centre. Exploring the New Catalan Cinema is therefore not merely an exercise in textual analysis. Rather, an examination of the institutional framework within which this cinema operates permits a more nuanced understanding of why textual coherencies may exist. Paul Willemen expands on what Berry and Farquhar's analytical framework of cinema and the national might look like when he writes that, 'in film studies, the issue of specificity is primarily a national one [and…] established by governmental actions implemented through institutions such as the legal framework of censorship, industrial and financial measures on the economic level, the gearing of training institutions towards employment in national media structures, systems of licensing governed by aspects of corporate law, and so on.' (Willemen, 2006, p. 33). Thus, this chapter specifically examines the role of governments, institutions and the Catalan media structures in the construction of the New Catalan Cinema, thus 'factoring in the prevailing economic and political framework' (Christie, 2013, p. 28). As such, this chapter relates predominantly to the research questions, 'what facilitated the beginning of the New

Catalan Cinema, and how has it developed since then?' as well as 'how does the Catalan language feature in the New Catalan Cinema?'.

Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas write that 'Catalan cinema is arguably a microcosm of how Catalan culture as a whole has had to come to terms with the realities, i.e the limitations, of its geographical and political territory and its status as a minority language and culture.' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 181). These limitations are reflected in the changing criteria for defining a film as Catalan, and by extension for defining Catalan cinema. Sometimes the Catalan language, and the policies that protect it, are viewed as problematic for the growth of the audio-visual sector and therefore the Catalan national cinema, whereas at other times the overlap of linguistic and audio-visual policy brings significant financial benefits to production companies based in Catalonia. Furthermore, the limitations of Catalan cinema mean that it is governed by both Catalan and Spanish institutions and policies that interact with transnational networks on a more global scale of change. Therefore, exploring, contextualising, and examining the contextual features of the New Catalan Cinema involves a consideration of their relation to changes in Spanish audio-visual policy, economy and politics.

The conflict over how to define 'national cinema' in the autonomous regions of Spain is not confined to Catalonia, and language is intimately tied up in definitions of national cinemas in the historical nationalities. The 1976 'Declaration on National Cinemas', published at the Ourense Film Week by filmmakers from Galicia, Catalonia, The Basque Country, Valencia, and the Canary Islands (Varela Veiga *et al.*, 1976) provides some historical context to the issues addressed in this chapter. This manifesto reveals that defining national cinemas in the autonomous regions was based on themes and languages present in the films themselves, but it also recognises that an industrial infrastructure is necessary in each location for the production, exhibition and distribution of these films, so that they can fulfil their purposes as 'instruments of ideological struggle'. In 1976, it seems,

economic viability is secondary to using films for nation-building. The four points of the declaration are summarised as follows:

1. 'National cinema' is understood as the films of those nationalities which conceive of cinematography as an instrument of ideological struggle of the exploited classes of the different nationalities of the Spanish State.
2. Every national cinema answering this will gather and demonstrate different characteristics and aspirations differentiated from the rest of the distinct peoples of the current Spanish state.
3. They will use cinema to revitalise their distinctive language, or to conform with point number one.
4. It is both necessary and urgent to create industrial infrastructure (production, distribution and exhibition) in each of the nationalities of the Spanish state in order to look after, make possible and viable these cinemas, and each should maintain interconnections and links with organisations in each nationality.

(Varela Veiga *et al.*, 1976)

There are a few points worth highlighting in this manifesto. Firstly, with its Marxist terminology and emphasis on the idea of a plurinational Spain, i.e. a nation made up of nations, the manifesto blurs Left-wing and (minority) nationalist ideologies and politics. This may be due to the political context at the time of writing during the last days of a long, centralist, and Right-wing dictatorship. However, it is also a characteristic that resurfaces in discussions of Catalan national cinema since then, and is also evident in textual analysis of some of the films themselves, pointing to a more general blurring of Leftism and nationalism in the discourse around national cinemas as those which are opposed to market-driven genre cinema most often associated with Hollywood. Secondly, the manifesto also points to the significance of language and themes in the definition of these national cinemas. In 1993 Marsha Kinder writes that the 'definition of regionalism by language, thematics, and cast is still crucial for Catalan cinema, for it determines whether a film qualifies for special subsidies by the regional government' (Kinder, 1993, p. 395). Mechanisms in place to support the Catalan language in cinema have been modified at least four times since the Ourense manifesto, but emphasis on Catalan language and

content is still a feature of audio-visual policy within the *Generalitat*, especially in the policies of 1998 and 2010.

In 1998 the controversial 'Llei de política lingüística' (Linguistic Policy Act) (article 28, act 3) sets a quota for the dubbing and subtitling into Catalan of Hollywood imports. However, the reactions to this are perhaps more significant than the law itself and in 2000 at the *Primer cicle del cinema català* (First Cycle of Catalan Cinema) in Sabadell, the sector's opposition to linguistic quotas in cinema was made known, and there was a subsequent change of heart in the *Generalitat* about the place of the Catalan language in the New Catalan Cinema. In 2000 the new governmental department that would deal with subsidies and audio-visual policies was set up; the *Institut Català de les industries culturals* (Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries) 'ICIC'.[5] In 2002 the *Generalitat*'s investment in audio-visual sector increases five-fold (Padrós Reig and López Sintas, 2005, p. 151). In 2003 the *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* (White Paper for the Cultural Industries), introduces a significant separation of linguistic and audio-visual policies, and in 2005 the 'Llei de communicació audiovisual de Catalunya' (Broadcasting Act of Catalonia) saw much greater economic support for Catalan films as those which are made in Catalonia, rather than those which are in the Catalan language. On the other hand, in 2007 the Spanish 'Ley de cine' (Law of Cinema) provided extra resources for producing Catalan language films, to be administered by the ICIC. In 2007 preparations also began for a Catalan 'Llei de cinema' (Law of Cinema), in which language would regain a more central position, although that law was not passed until 2010. The first part of this chapter is devoted to understanding the reasons for, and significance of, these changes and the second part examines some key institutions for the New Catalan Cinema.

Policies

[5] As of 2011 the *Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals* (Catalan Insitute of Cultural Businesses) 'ICEC'

Kathryn Crameri writes that 'culture was always going to be an important area of political action for whichever party was elected [in 1980], partly because it was cultural nationalism that had provided the most plausible means of resistance to the totalitarian Spanish nationalism of the Franco dictatorship' (Crameri, 2008, p. 4). She also points out that because 'Catalonia's powers are fairly extensive compared with those that other non-federal states in Europe have granted to their regions', it would be through cultural policy that Catalan identity was rebuilt after its repression during the Franco dictatorship (ibid.). The Catalan statute of autonomy, written in 1979, set the tone for the rebuilding of Catalan identity and in article three, the importance of language for this is made clear. 'The Government of Catalonia will ensure the normal and official use of both languages, will take the measures necessary in order to ensure knowledge of them, and will create the conditions making it possible for them to achieve full equality in terms of the rights and duties of citizens of Catalonia' (*Statute of Autonomy*, 1979).

Emphasis on the recuperation of language was to be expected after over forty years of Francoist dictatorship 'when Catalan language, national symbols and culture were forbidden or reduced to the category of Spanish folklore' (Nagel, 2006, p. 23). Thus, when centre-right party *Convergència i Unió* (Convergence and Union) 'CiU' were elected to the *Generalitat* in 1980, the recuperation of Catalan language and culture was a priority. CiU remained in government for twenty-three years, with Jordi Pujol as president throughout this time. For this reason, the period between 1980 and 2003 in Catalonia are known as 'the Pujol years'. Kathryn Crameri writes that the measurable successes of CiU's cultural policies are, 'the dramatic rise in the number of people able to speak, read and write Catalan, and the creation, largely from scratch, of a cultural infrastructure involving public buildings, administrative bodies, and facilities for disseminating cultural information to the public' (Crameri, 2008, p. 4). In short, the recuperation of the Catalan language, and the

development of a framework within which Catalan cinema, along with the other cultural forms, could develop.

As Marsha Kinder points out, 'the distinctiveness of Catalan identity is based primarily on language and culture rather than on race or religion' (Kinder, 1993, p. 394). Thus, overlap between cultural and linguistic policy in Catalonia since the transition is inevitable, and can be attributed in large part to the policy with the most significant impact; The 'Llei de Normalització Lingüística' (Linguistic Normalisation Act) (1983). Developed from the Catalan statute of autonomy's remit for creating linguistic equality, it was passed unanimously by the Catalan parliament, and 'backed by the vast majority of Catalans' through a referendum, meaning that it 'should really be attributed to the Catalan parliament as a whole, and not just to CiU' (Crameri, 2008, p. 52).

As cinema in Catalonia after the Transition to Democracy was initially part of the programme to revive the Catalan language, discussing the institutions and policies which have governed Catalan cinema since 1975 necessarily involves a discussion of the changing place of cinema within what is known as *L'espai català de communicaió,* translated by Josep Gifreu as 'The Catalan Communicative Space' (Gifreu, 2012). This is the term used to describe the ideal of a Catalan-language media space encompassing press, radio, television, cinema and, later, the internet. Initially the idea was 'pan-Catalan', i.e; that this was to be a cross-border space that included all of the *països catalans*.[6] Thus, the Catalan Communicative Space was to be a transnational linguistic and cultural space with a common audio-visual media. However, in practice it manifested mostly in the setting-up of Catalan-language public broadcast media in the autonomous region of Catalonia, whilst the other regions set up their own audio-visual networks. There are many obstacles that

[6] The Catalan-speaking regions of Spain and France are collectively known as the 'països catalans', which translates as the 'Catalan lands' or the 'Catalan countries'. The concept of the 'països catalans' includes Catalonia, The Valencian Community, The Balearic Islands, parts of Murcia, parts of Aragón, the Rousillon area of France, Andorra (where it is the only official language) and the city of Alghero in Sardinia, Italy.

prevent the realisation of a pan-Catalan 'communicative space', a major one being that these regions are administrated separately. Furthermore, in some cases, the Catalan-speaking regions are part of an administrative region or state that are not Catalan-speaking such as; Murcia in Spain, Pyrenees-Oriental in France, and Sardinia in Italy.

Another reason may be that 'pan-Catalanism' as a concept has at times been negatively received in the Catalan-speaking regions outside of Catalonia. The fragmented relationship between the *països catalans* is complicated by the assumption that Barcelona, as a global city and capital of Catalonia, is at the centre of the pan-Catalan configuration, and provides context to the argument that Catalan cinema should more appropriately be called '*cinema barceloní'* (Barcelonan Cinema) (Comas, 2010, p. 24).

> Catalan territory, ruled by different systems, is divided by state frontiers and regional boundaries, and, in the case of cities, is managed using models that are sometimes so different as to be antagonistic. It is difficult to imagine that a territory could be so fragmented. Nonetheless, these are really only minor issues in comparison with Barcelona's lack of drive in terms of unapologetically assuming its role as cultural capital of the country [referring to the països catalans]. Crudely put, Barcelona has not only failed to decisively extend its influence to the territories with which its shares a language, but has even failed to do so in Catalonia itself. Indeed, Barcelona and its hinterland have traditionally been considered by some to be naturally antagonistic.
>
> (Calvo, 2010, p. 110)

Despite these numerous problems, obtaining the Catalan Communicative Space is still an objective for many and has informed cultural policy-making since the beginning of democracy. It is a concept that has its origins in Josep Gifreu's doctoral research, which was part of the wider discussion in Europe about minority voices and languages in communications and the media that surrounded the 'Macbride report' (Abel *et al.*, 1980). However, it was developed into Catalan government policy in 1991 with Jordi Pujol's report *Construir l'espai català de comunicació*, (Constructing the Catalan Communicative Space) which led to the Catalan parliament passing a resolution on the Catalan communicative space in 1999, and then the 'Broadcasting Act of Catalonia' in 2005 (Gifreu, 1982, 2012). Perhaps because of this, 'Catalonia is the autonomous community in

which research into "communicative spaces" is most advanced, owing to a fundamental need for self-affirmation' (Jones, 2007, p. 500).

Usually this research is focused on radio and television, but in 1989 one research project sought to determine possible avenues for development in the audio-visual sector (Bonet *et al.*, 1989). It examined exhibition and production in Catalonia, as well as administrative intervention from local and state bodies, and then compared this analysis with a summary of the situation in the UK, Germany, France, and Italy, presenting findings to the *Generalitat,* who then published it. The report ends with an observation about language that could still be made today.

> The last issue that it is necessary to address is the defence of a Catalan-language cinema. In a small country like ours that does not have a major language, establishing defensive measures clashes with the interests of exhibitors and distributors at state or multinational level. Producing Catalan-language films leads to a reduced market, which is an obvious disadvantage that makes profitable production, distribution and exhibition difficult. In many small countries, that are not bilingual like ours, subtitling is more common because it is much cheaper than dubbing or filming different language versions. However, in the Catalan case, if we don't want cinema to be the exception to linguistic normalisation policy, then it is necessary to continue supporting Catalan-language productions, facilitating the production of versions in other languages in order to aid exportation, force a change from dubbing to subtitling, and, in certain cases, dubbing foreign films into Catalan.
>
> (Bonet *et al.*, 1989, p. 189)

Dubbing imported films into Catalan was a major feature of the 1998 *Llei de Política Lingüística.* Subsidies were available for filming the original version of a production in Catalan as part of the Linguistic Normalization Strategy. However, audience figures for Hollywood films are far larger than those for domestic productions, so a significant proportion of this department's budget was directed toward dubbing Hollywood imports into Catalan. The *Generalitat*, still using cinema as a tool for linguistic normalisation, sought to counteract the lack of Catalan language cinema by implementing legislation that would require 50% of all imported films to be dubbed into Catalan, (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1998(Article 23 (3)). Unlike in television where the *Generalitat* was able to

apply protective linguistic policy to the Catalan language on publicly owned channels such as *Televisió de Catalunya* whilst also accepting the dominance of bilingual programming on private Catalan channels such as *8TV*, attempts to regulate language in cinema have often met with rejection from the sector. The international nature of filmmaking and distributing means that the *Generalitat* has had very little power over language dubbing; in the eyes of Hollywood, Spain is a single market with a single language, and attempts by the *Generalitat* to demand Catalan-language copies of Hollywood productions have provoked strong reactions at local and international level. According to Kathryn Crameri, opposition to the 'Llei de Política Lingüística' meant that 'the then *Conseller de Cultura* Joan Maria Pujals was forced to fly to the USA to try and negotiate personally with the American companies' (Crameri, 2008, p. 117). The 'Llei de Política Lingüística' clashed enormously with the economic interests of Hollywood distributors and many in the Catalan exhibition sector were also of the opinion that the legislation was too restrictive. After all, as Elsaesser has pointed out in reference to European cinemas, 'without Hollywood there is no exhibition sector' (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 39). In contrast, and despite viewing habits suggesting otherwise because of generally low audience numbers for Catalan language films (El Baròmetre de la comunicació i la cultura, 2011), the reaction of the public to linguistic quotas for Catalan-language Hollywood imports was favourable. Cultural organisations such as la *Plataforma per a la Llengua* (Platform for the Language), who describe themselves as 'a non-governmental organization that works to promote the Catalan language as a tool for social cohesion', was angry at the fact that the audio-visual sector did not seem to be on board, and targeted those cinemas who did not comply (Plataforma per la llengua, no date; Comas, 2010, p. 179). Eventually this policy had to be repealed, 'after a two-year battle in the Parliament and the courts about its legality' (Crameri, 2008, p. 117).

The late 1990s are characterised by debates about the extent to which the *Generalitat* should be allowed to interfere in everyday language use, especially in relation to cinema, drawing attention to the thin line between 'promotion' and 'imposition' in the protectionist measures taken to preserve the Catalan language in cinema. As Crameri summarises, 'by the 1990s cracks had begun to appear in this unity as policymakers and language planners began to extend their activities further into areas that affected the everyday lives of Catalans' (Crameri, 2008, p. 53). This tension was felt acutely in the audio-visual sector where some felt that Catalan cinema should be in the Catalan language, whereas others perceived the emphasis on language as a limitation, restricting access to a larger market that would decrease financial risk. As Miquel Porter i Moix summarises in 1992, 'while for some, the linguistic element was essential for Catalan film, others considered any film produced in Catalonia to be Catalan' (Porter Moix, 1992, p. 349). Many felt that the imposition of linguistic quotas was premature, given that Catalan cinema in the 1990s was characterised by very low number of annual productions, and just a few key filmmakers. This is highlighted by José Luis Guerín's statement in 1992 that, 'before they normalise Catalan, they should normalise cinema. Catalan cinema? Very well, but where is it?' (cited in Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 75).

The 'Llei de Política Lingüística' can loosely be interpreted as a protectionist reaction to globalisation and the free market, as Elisa Roller observes in her article about this law in *Regional and Federal Studies*.

> The nationalist-led Generalitat argued that the legislation was necessary to instil in people the acceptance of the cultural and linguistic plurality recognized by the 1978 Constitution. It argued that with the globalization of the economy, the industrialization of cultural products through the mass media and the boom in telecommunications and information technology, languages with limited use like that of Catalan are in danger of being excluded with the greater use of languages such as English and Spanish.
>
> (Roller, 2001, p. 46)

However, many of the reasons for which it seemed absurd to impose a Catalan-language cinema by directing money towards the dubbing of imports rather than towards developing a local industry relate to wider changes in the Spanish audio-visual landscape. Therefore, in order to fully contextualise the crossovers and tensions between Catalan cultural and linguistic policy with Spanish audio-visual policy in the 1990s, it is necessary to examine those changes.

The first government of democratic Spain was led by the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE), who were in government from 1982 until 1996, presided over all the while by Felipe González. There is much written about Spanish cinema during this period, known as 'the socialist period' (Riambau, 1995). However, the dominant narrative seems to be that the left-leaning auteur cinephiles that made up the bulk of cultural institutions such as the *Academia de la Artes y las Sciencas Cinematográficas*, (Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences) during this time had a certain concept of the 'desirable national film', and the way in which it should be consumed (Triana-Toribio, 2014). This concept of the ideal model for a Spanish national cinema is inextricably linked to the so-called 'Ley Miró', named after Pilar Miró, the 'Director General of Cinema' between 1982 and 1985 in the *Instituto del Cine y las Artes Audiovisuales* (Institute of Cinema and Audio-Visual Art) 'ICAA', a Spanish governmental institute which had been set up to deal with audio-visual policies. The law 'was a legislation created to eradicate or at least counteract the Francoist influence on cinema and rewrite its legacy as far as possible' and this was done by favouring 'artistically ambitious' films over the genre co-productions, pornography, and conservative comedies that dominated Spanish production at the time (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 116). The legislation, which used an advanced credit system, favoured 'safe, middle-brow, art-house films, for which the maintenance of certain cultural standards was prioritised alongside a recognition of the importance of commercial viability' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 2).

The preferences of the ICAA, the '*Ley Miró'*, and the Spanish Film Academy that characterise Spanish cinema of the 1980s would not find support in the next generation of filmmakers, who saw this system as producers pandering to government aims rather than to audiences. Barry Jordan points out that 'from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s levels of film production in Spain were worryingly low and audiences seemed to be deserting the cinema in favour of other forms of media entertainment' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 2). As in other countries, cinema attendance was dropping but in Spain the impact of the socialist film policy was partly to blame. Jordan summarises that, 'these apparently alarming production totals were the end result of a policy, developed under the Socialist government (1982-1996) and inspired by the Miró decrees of the early 1980s.' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 2). By the early 1990s the Film Protection Fund had reached virtual bankruptcy and, 'in 1994 Carmen Alborch, Socialist Minister for Culture, was obliged to radically alter the direction of government policy by scrapping the system of advance credits in favour of a system of automatic subsidies based on box office receipts' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 3). Thus, 'this arguably shifted the balance of power away from directors (who had previously been the custodians of government subsidies) to producers, who would now take on the economic risks of film production' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 3).

In the early 1990s discussions around the GATT (General Agreement of Tariff and Trade) reignited debates all over Europe about whether to consider cinema as a cultural or economic product. These renegotiations, often characterised as a debate between the USA defining cinema as an economic product and France (representing Europe) defining cinema as a cultural product, eventually resulted in cinema becoming part of a 'cultural exception' to the free market agreements. Thus, European cinemas could still use public subsidies to prop themselves up in the face of Hollywood, but it had become clear that in order to win back domestic audiences, these subsidies would have to support a more commercial

domestic cinema. As such, Spanish cinema in the early 1990s went from having cultural to economic imperatives and is characterised by; general falling of audience numbers as new media and technology develop, a subsequent return to genre production, the increased involvement of television in the funding of filmmaking and watching and the opening of new film schools. Alejandro Amenábar articulates the opinion of the Spanish filmmaking community in the 1996 thriller *Tesis,* when in a moment of meta cinematic criticism of current trends, the film lecturer Jorge Castro (Xavier Elorriaga) stresses to his students, the filmmakers of tomorrow, 'we must give the public what they want'(Amenábar, 1996).

The aforementioned changes to Spanish film policy by the Socialist PSOE in 1994 were seen to signal 'the beginning of the end for a subsidised film industry in Spain' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 5). Spanish production figures were on the up, directors from previous generations were more active and a new generation of directors were injecting life into what had been seen to have gone stale. In Catalonia established filmmakers such as Ventura Pons were active and successful, but generally speaking, the changes in Spanish film policy in 1994 and 1996 brought more problems than solutions for Catalan cinema. Comas writes that many complained about the changes because it meant a limit on the number of projects that were tagged 'artistically risky' or 'special interest' (Comas, 2010, p. 129). From the state perspective, films in the Catalan language fell into these categories almost automatically because of their small audience. In 2000, the then Minister for Culture in the *Generalitat*, Xavier Bru de Sala, summarised the impact of these changes in Catalonia.

> Production in Barcelona fell dramatically when the Ministry limited the advanced subsidies and increased bonuses for ticket sales, and there was no change in the subsidies from the *Generalitat*. Spanish cinema began to take off when a growing number of films produced in Madrid began won public approval. Thus, Spanish production makes up over ten per cent of exhibited films, whereas the screen quota for Catalan films remains below one per cent, even in Catalonia.
>
> ([cited in] Comas, 2010, p. 27)

Crameri writes that by the late 1990s there were 'some indications that Catalonia was beginning to lose its advantage over other areas of Spain in the cultural industries' (Crameri, 2008, p. 119). In addition to this, using cinema as a tool for linguistic normalisation in a context of support for the desubsidisation of industry that was occurring at state level during the 1990s created further obstacles to the development of Catalan cinema. Comas summarises that in the mid-1990s 'the *Generalitat* wants cinema to speak Catalan, just as television does, and the professionals don't want language to be such an important factor when it comes to handing out financial aid or legislating industry' (Comas, 2010, p. 143). A 1998 report from the European Audio-visual Observatory summarises the extent to which the Catalan language was necessary for access to Catalan audio-visual subsidies.

> Indeed, apart from the Catalonian language being required as the original language of a film for all the funding schemes (except funding for preparation), television production funding is allocated according to various criteria, one of which is the number of screenings in Catalan. For distribution funding, the distribution of supported films has to fulfil several requirements: the production of at least four prints in Catalan, the number of towns in Catalonia in which the film will be screened (10 towns of more than 45,000 inhabitants or all the capitals of the various counties of Catalonia and Barcelona), and promotion material in Catalan. Finally, all feature, television or short films supported either for production or distribution, either selectively or automatically, must be broadcast or shown theatrically in Catalonian cinemas in the Catalonian language for a minimum period of twelve months.
>
> (Bizern *et al.*, 1998, p. 52)

Crameri writes that the criticism most often levelled at *Convergència i Unió* was that, in the area of cinema, they had confused cultural policy with linguistic policy to such an extent that this imposed artificial restraints on the growth of the sector (Crameri, 2008, p. 117). This opinion is voiced by many at the *'Primer Cicle de Cinema Català'* (First Series of Catalan Cinema) in Sabadell in 2000, (Bellmunt *et al.*, 2001). Isona Passola, at that time a producer and director, but who would later become president of the *Acadèmia del Cinema Català*, summarised the general opinion of the sector, stating that; 'producing in other languages is not negative, but rather it reinforces the industry in order to later be able

to produce in Catalan whenever you want' (Bellmunt *et al.*, 2001). This statement would turn out to be somewhat prophetic, as the development of Catalan cinema after these discussions demonstrates.

In an appeal to policy-makers echoing those in Spain, filmmakers in the 1990s in Catalonia urged for political agendas to be left aside, at least temporarily, in order to focus on strengthening the industry and recapturing the domestic audience (Bellmunt *et al.*, 2001). Thus, in line with debates occurring in Europe and in Spain during the 1990s, debates in Catalan cinema also sought to resolve the issue of cinema as both a cultural and economic product. Furthermore, by the late 1990s the effectiveness of linguistic normalisation in education, public administration, television, radio and the press had greatly revived the Catalan language, making it less of an urgent matter (Crameri, 2008, p. 60). Also, in the 1990s and early 2000s 'the initial enthusiasm for Catalan during the early years of autonomy seems to have died down', suggesting that conditions were right to move away from audio visual policies lead by linguistic agendas (ibid.). The objective of a Catalan-language cinema became secondary to creating an industry strong enough to support this ideal, and this created the necessary conditions for setting up a framework that would nurture industry and support the New Catalan Cinema.

A more global factor that may have contributed to the failure of the linguistic quotas set out in 1998 is that the general understanding of the effect of globalisation on local identity was changing and it was no longer equated with its loss. In 1998 the then *Conseller de Cultura* (Minister of Culture), Joan M Pujals argued that 'a strongly defined cultural identity [identified elsewhere as Catalonia's main asset] would give Catalonia more chance of retaining its character in a globalised world' in his book *Les Noves Fronteres de Catalunya* ('Catalonia's New Borders') (Pujals, 1998, cited in; Crameri, 2008, p. 119). Crameri summarises a talk he gave a year later as follows; 'Pujals was convinced that Catalonia had both the creativity and the industrial infrastructure to become the centre of a

global culture industry, but needed to construct a distinctive "brand" in order to do so' (Crameri, 2008, p. 119). This signalled a U-turn in the response of the *Generalitat* to globalisation; no longer was it something to defend the Catalan language and culture against, but it was seen as a tool for the strengthening of the Catalan identity through international recognition. The New Catalan Cinema in the early-mid 2000s is characterised by genre and documentary production in languages other than Catalan, and a temporary synchronicity between the sector and the *Generalitat* created the necessary conditions for Catalan cinema to flourish on the international stage. This signalled the beginning of Catalan cinema 'making innovative connections between the local and the transnational, bypassing the national by aligning with world markets' (Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, p. 3).

In 2000 the *Insitut Català de les Indústries Culturals* (Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries) 'ICIC', which as of 2011 is called the *Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals* (Catalan Institute of Cultural Businesses) 'ICEC', was formed with the aim of developing the cultural industries in Catalonia. Its commitment to the audio-visual industry is exemplified in the *Llibre Blanc de les Indústries Culturals*, (White Paper for the Cultural Industries) which they published through the *Generalitat* in 2003. In this white paper, Xavier Cubeles contributes the audio-visual section, and summarises the state of the industry, highlighting economic factors that would influence change in policy. In this he writes that, 'even though Catalonia is the second centre of audio-visual production in Spain, it is distanced from the Community of Madrid by a serious inequality in the agglomeration of cinematographic activity by large-scale corporations' (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2002, p. 18). This not only provides something of an explanation for the general aesthetic differences between cinema in Barcelona and Madrid that was dealt with in the literature review, but also provides an explanation for the differences in reactions to the 1994 changes in Spanish film policy under Carmen Alborch. The end of the 'Ley Miró' in Catalonia, as in the rest of Spain, 'saw the diminishing of production companies owned by

directors' and the 'domination of conglomerates', which in Catalonia are primarily Filmax and Mediapro. However, the Spanish conglomerates also dominated here; Sogetel, Sogecinea, Lola films, Tornasol, Telecinco and Antena 3 (Comas, 2010, p. 31). A change was needed in Catalan audio-visual policy in order to adapt to this new landscape of genre production. Cubeles identifies four main needs in the Catalan audio-visual sector, which Crameri summarises as follows:

- The need to engage fully and enthusiastically with the Spanish audio-visual sector, and for it to engage with Catalonia;
- The need to find niche products in which the Catalans can excel [documentary and animation are highlighted as two possible areas for development];
- The need to work with Barcelona City Council to make Barcelona a centre for audio-visual production, professional training and the development of related technologies;
- The need to attract private investors by using public funds strategically.

(Crameri, 2008, pp. 121–124).

From a policy perspective, the priorities of the New Catalan Cinema are similar to those of Spanish cinema in the 1990s; a focus on industry and using public subsidies to encourage private investment. In 2003 when the first tripartite socialist Catalan government of the decade ended 23 years of centre-right single-party rule under *CiU* and President Pujol, they quickly moved the responsibility of language planning from the Department of Culture to the *Departament de la Presidència* (Presidential Department), thus taking a step towards separating language and culture that would benefit the audio-visual industry enormously (Crameri, 2008, p. 46; 118).[7] This is what Crameri calls a 'trial separation of language and culture', and it is an important factor in creating the necessary conditions for the consolidation of an industry that would subsequently occur (Crameri, 2008, p. 118).

[7] The first tripartit of the 2000s in the Generalitat was made up of three socialist parties: *Partit Socialista de* Catalunya 'PSC' (the Catalan branch of the PSOE), the *Ciutadans pel Canvi* 'CpC' and the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* 'ERC', and was headed by Pasqual Maragall from PSC.

In 2003 Catalonia had its first tripartite Socialist government in 2003, and in 2006 the second tripartite Catalan government was also socialist, although made up a different grouping of political parties.[8] In 2004 the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party), 'PSOE' returned to government after one term of the Conservative *Partido Popular* (People's Party), 'PP'. This meant that for the first time since Second Republic, the governments of Catalonia and Spain were somewhat in alignment, being mostly populated by Socialist politicians from branches of the same political party, the Socialist Party. The two terms of socialist government in Catalonia (2003- 2010) and are known as the 'tripartite years' because of the nature of the coalitions that were in power. The two terms of Socialist government in Spain (2004-2011) are known as the 'Zapatero years', after the prime minister throughout this time, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. Triana-Toribio notes that in Spanish cinema there was 'a renewal of the idea that the state bears responsibility for cultural funding and that cinema is un *bien cultural* [a cultural good]*'* (Triana-Toribio, 2014, p. 66). Jordan adds that, because of this, subsidies were 'negotiated largely through the rhetoric of art, culture and national identity' (Jordan, 2011, p. 37).

In 2005 the *Generalitat* implemented a clear framework for defining films as Catalan for funding purposes. These changes brought some clarity on how to determine a film as Catalan, but are based solely on economic criteria, which is surprising given the changes in Spanish film policy mentioned above, but reflects the trial separation of language and culture in the Catalan context. According to this framework, a film was considered Catalan in the following instances:

[8] The second Catalan tripartite government was made up of the same parties as the previous, but with the addition of a coalition between the eco-socialist party; *Inciativa per Catalunya verds*, and the Catalan branch of the Spanish *Izquierda unida*; *Esquerra unida i alternative.* This government was headed by José Montilla, from the PSC, who was also the first president of Catalonia not born there, reflecting the contemporary trend within Catalan nationalism to try and define Catalan national identity as civic, rather than ethnic.

a) when it is produced by companies based in Catalonia
b) when it is coproduced between these companies and companies from elsewhere in the Spanish state (as long as the Catalan contribution is higher than the Spanish),
c) when it is coproduced between these companies and producers outside of Spain (in this case the proportion of participation must be between 20 and 80 per cent of the total cost),
d) in the case of multi-national productions, between 10 and 70 percent

(Comas, 2010, p. 22).

Previous attempts had been made to separate audio-visual from linguistic policy after Pujals support for creating a Catalan 'brand' in order to internationalise Catalan culture, but Crameri points out that in his policies, as in the 2002 *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* (White Paper for the Cultural Industries), the importance of language is still a priority, even if not so restrictive as in earlier policies under *CiU*. She writes that they were 'trying to improve Catalonia's capacity to export its products while at the same time retaining ideological commitment to one of the main barriers to cultural exports, the Catalan language itself'(Crameri, 2008, p. 120). The trial separation of language and culture in the 2005 framework effectively meant that subsidies for 'the dubbing of films into Catalan; the production, subtitling, or dubbing of DVDs; or to cinemas that showed films in Catalan' were given in parallel to audio-visual subsidies, 'under the heading of Linguistic Normalisation' (Crameri, 2008, p. 116). This meant that as of 2005, producers based in Catalonia could access multiple layers of subsidies: from the *Generalitat* there were audio-visual and linguistic subsidies, and this was in addition to the funding available from Spanish public and private institutions, as well as co-production funds such as Ibermedia, MEDIA, and Eurimages. Àlex Navarro Garrich, director of the MEDIA desk in Barcelona, expands on how funds were allocated, explaining that although films had to be Catalan according to the criteria listed above, certain funds kept aside for 'special cultural interest' could only be accessed by accumulating certain points based on the participation of Catalan artistic and technical talent (Navarro Garrich, 2015).

What followed was a boom in Catalan and Spanish production and a general increase in productions up until 2010. The years within that period that marked a significant increase on the preceding year in Catalonia were; 2006 (up 32), and 2010 (up 22). For Spain, the years that marked a significant increase were; 2001 (up 31), and 2007 (up 22) (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 37). Increased co-productions are a feature of the mid-2000s, and 2007 marked a peak in the number of co-productions for both Catalonia and Spain, with 50 percent of all Spanish co-productions that year being made in Catalonia (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 53). That was also the year that Catalonia co-produced most with 'the rest of Spain' and the year that Catalan fiction productions and co-productions made the most money at the Spanish box office. With regards to Spanish cinema, Jordan writes that in 2007 'the extremely welcome rise in market share was due entirely to the commercial impact of only one film, the blockbuster success *El orfanato* (*The Orphanage*, Bayona, produced by Guillermo del Toro and Rodar y Rodar), released on 11 October 2007' (Jordan, 2011, p. 21). *El orfanato* was a Catalan co-production and so functioned as a success story for both Catalan and Spanish cinemas. Other profitable Catalan fiction films released that year that are notable and included in this study are; *[·REC]* (Balagueró and Plaza, 2007)*, El coronel Macià* (Forn, 2006)*, Salvador (Puig Antich)* (Huerga, 2006).

In 2007 the Spanish 'Ley de Cine' was updated, specifying that a fund to support cinema in co-official languages would be distributed by the corresponding administrative bodies in the regions with the aim of, 'promoting the cultural plurality of Spain and equality of opportunity for the languages in every territory'(R, 2007, sec. 36). In Catalonia preparations were beginning for their own 'Llei de cinema'. In these preparations, as in the *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* before it, there is a dual focus on economy and culture. However, the emphasis on language is more explicit, and the aims are stated as follows;

- Increase the efficiency with which public resources are administered

- Improve the infrastructure around the audio-visual industry
- Promote the Catalan language in cinematographic production, distribution and exhibition

(Generalitat, 2007, sec. 1)

It seems that for the *Generalitat*, by 2007 it was time to push for more Catalan content and Catalan language cinema again. However, the law was much debated and was not passed until 2010, by which time the Catalan and Spanish political landscapes were much changed. The economic crisis hit Spain hard and created a collapse in the housing market. Rates of unemployment shot up and remain high at the time of writing. Catalonia, apparently leading the way for federalism in Spain, is one of the richer regions of Spain. However, economic strain and a centralised taxation system that the Catalans saw as unfair on their region only served to increase historical tensions that had been brought back in to focus in the context of recovering historical memory. In cinema the economic crisis meant that in 2012, the Spanish *IVA cultural* 'Cultural Tax' rose from 8 per cent to 21 per cent, which affected and continues to affect production and exhibition costs and has an impact on ticket prices. At the time of writing it remains at 21 per cent.

Economic pressures added to the general recuperation of a national historical memory in Catalonia and nationalist sentiment returned. The Spanish government's handling of this added fuel to the fire. On 28th June 2010 the Spanish Constitutional Court would rewrite 14 articles of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy that was re-written and approved in 2006. They also dictated the reinterpretation of 27 more, as well as challenging the usage of the term 'nation' in the preamble. Perhaps more importantly in the context of an economic crisis, the articles challenged included those that prepared the way for increased fiscal autonomy. The Catalan people showed their displeasure at the decision of the Constitutional Court by protesting under the tagline, 'we are a nation, we decide'; a protest

that around one million people attended.[9] December of 2010 would see the end of the 'tripartite years' in Catalonia and a return of centre-right and pro-federalist *Convergència i Unió*, this time headed by Artur Mas. In 2011 'the Zapatero years' in Spain would also be over and the centre-right *Partido Popular,* who had been loud in voicing opposition to the new Catalan statute of autonomy, would return to Spanish government in 2011. The *Partido Popular* took it as their mandate to make sure that Spain remained 'indivisible'.

In this context of increased nationalist sentiment, the Catalan 'Llei de cinema' was finally passed, although this time the objective was even more explicitly geared towards securing a Catalan-language cinema as it states that an objective of the law is to 'guarantee the rights of the citizens of Catalonia to choose whether to see a film in Catalan or Castilian, and to favour the presence of films in original version with subtitles'(Catalunya, 2010). A *Variety* article from 2009 entitled 'Hollywood faces dubbing dilemma in Spain' summarises that 'Catalonia, one of the country's wealthiest regions, is threatening regulations to push US majors to release movies in subtitled prints rather than dubbing them into Spanish'(Hopewell and Mayorga, 2009). Despite some exceptions, as in other countries cinema audiences have been in decline throughout this period, and cinema audiences for Spanish and Catalan films remain low in Spain and Catalonia. Significantly though, the Catalan audience for Catalan cinema and Catalan-language was increasing, especially towards the end of the decade. As the newspaper ABC points out in its headline, referring to the year 2010, 'Catalan cinema doubles the number of spectators in a year', highlighting secondarily that, 'there has also been a similar increase in the public for films whose original version is in Catalan' (EFE, 2011). Also in 2010, the number of original version Catalan-language films overtook the number of films dubbed in Catalan for the first time, although it would not last into the next year (Estadística de l'audiovisual a

[9] Attendance figures differ wildly depending on the source, but are placed at between 660,000 (the Spanish media) and 2 million (the organisers).

Catalunya, 2015).Thus, there were signs of hope for a domestic audience in Catalonia between 2010 and 2012, although many were cautious about raising these hopes because although audiences may have doubled, in 2011 the audience for Catalan-language cinema was still comparable to the audience for art-cinema (El Baròmetre de la comunicació i la cultura, 2011).

Temporary synchronicity between Catalan and Spanish governments and a period of increased investment in cinema from both governments throughout the mid-2000s led to a period of increased production and revenue for both Catalan and Spanish cinemas. However, changes would occur from 2010 onwards in Catalan and Spanish government, as well as in Catalan audio-visual policy. These would be namely the reversion to centre-right governments in both territories and the reappearance of cinema as a tool for linguistic normalisation in Catalonia. The tone of the article in *Variety* about the dubbing quotas in the 'Llei de cinema' reveals the attitude Hollywood took toward this renewed attempt of the *Generalitat* to intervene in market economics through linguistic and cultural policy. Angel Comas' observations on the general mood among filmmakers in 2010 also suggest that history appeared to be repeating itself, and there is a disjuncture once again between the audio-visual sector and the *Generalitat* in terms of the '*cinema català o cinema en català*' (Catalan cinema, or cinema *in* Catalan) debate.

> The biggest complaint among filmmakers in Catalonia is about the attitude of the administration as it prefers to use cinema as a tool for linguistic normalisation instead of a respecting it and promoting it as an art (which if they were to do, would also contribute to linguistic normalisation). It prefers to put money into dubbing North American films, especially blockbusters and children's films, rather than putting effort into strengthening a truly autochthonous and differentiated cinema in whatever language. Opposing the financing of dubbing into Catalan is a unanimous position held by those in industry, and not only of dubbing into Catalan but all dubbing, because it adulterates the work of art that films can be.
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> (Comas, 2010, p. 28)

Just as the 1998 'Llei de Política Lingüística' was contested and followed by a conscious effort to support the development of industry rather than just Catalan-language films, the

2010 ‘Llei de cinema’ was followed by similar developments. The Catalan *2021 pla estratègic de cultura; cinema* (2021 Strategic plan for Catalonia: Cinema), which was written in 2012, summarises the gains of Catalan cinema since 2000 and provides objectives for the following ten years. Whereas previous documents are concise in their objectives, this time there are twenty-one very specific objectives. Some objectives were created specifically to deal with the current economic problems, such as the aim to, ‘deal with the current limitations on financing through new ways of capturing private investment that favours further capitalisation’ (Departament de Cultura. Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 23). As a nation without a state and restricted fiscal autonomy this is difficult, but in 2015 a new Catalan ‘telecommunications tax’ came into effect, which was announced by Isona Passola, by this time president of the Catalan Film Academy, at the Gaudi awards in February 2014 (‘VI Premis Gaudí: Isona Passola’s speech’, 2014). It would collect 0.25 euros a month from the telecoms operators for every ADSL connection in Catalonia, and the money would be directed specifically towards the audio-visual sector. However, the telecoms operators are severely opposed to this, and it is declared ‘unconstitutional’ by the Spanish tax office (Baena Diaz, 2014; Cia, 2015). Some in the sector were sceptical of this move by the Academy and the *Generalitat*, and saw it as a highly politicised move. Aritz Lekuona, marketing director of the *Escola Superior de Cinema i Audiovisuals de Catalunya* (The Catalan Centre for Advanced Studies in Cinema and Audio-visual Media) ‘ESCAC’, speculates that they knew the Spanish tax office would deem it illegal for Catalonia to collect and administer taxes autonomously and that the Academy only announced it in order to later be able to use this as a reason to garner support for independence within the audio-visual sector (Lekuona, 2015).

In early 2015, the gains of this tax, which had only been in place a few months, could not be located, so how this will proceed remains to be seen, but it certainly recalls Willemen’s observation that the issue of national specificity in film studies is established by

governmental actions […] such as […] industrial and financial measures on an economic level' (Willemen, 2006; Cia, 2015). Other objectives of the *2021 pla stratègic de cultura; cinema* include an increased focus on creating a 'cine-literate public' in order to generate a domestic audience, suggesting the equation of national cinema with art cinema discussed in the literature review, as well as a specific aim to boost collaboration between the *Generalitat* and state administration for the promotion of cinema in general. The key statement is still that 'internationalisation is key for the future of the Catalan cinema sector', reflecting a continued desire to bypass the state and connect with a wider transnational network in order to strengthen the New Catalan Cinema, (Departament de Cultura. Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012, p. 19).

This discussion of the policies surrounding the New Catalan Cinema has demonstrated that they vary depending on the specific socio-political contexts in which they were made, and that the importance of the Catalan language to the definition of Catalan cinema, whilst always important to the *Generalitat*, is not always as important to filmmakers. The New Catalan Cinema is characterised contextually by an oscillation between both sides of this debate; the first half of the decade is characterised by an emphasis on strengthening industry, and the second half is characterised by a renewed emphasis on Catalan language in cinema. Given the contexts in which these changes took place, it is clear that Catalan audio-visual policy cannot be discussed in isolation, because changes in Spanish and European policy, as well as developments in global trade agreements in the 1990s, have contributed to the changing network of policies within which the New Catalan Cinema has grown. However, policies are far from the only influence on the development of the New Catalan Cinema and educational and cinematic institutions have had an equally significant impact.

Institutions

It is difficult to overstate the importance of educational institutions for the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, because they trained the filmmakers that would enter the debates surrounding its development, and the institutions themselves have been central to imagining new models of audio-visual production. In 1994, the aforementioned ESCAC opened its doors. It was the first film school in Spain to offer full degrees and it was followed a year later in 1995 by the *Escuela de Cinematografía y del Audiovisual de la Comunidad de Madrid* (The Madrid Film School) 'ECAM'. Aside from the specialised film schools, filmmaking courses within universities also began to spring up, of which the *Màster en Documental de creació* (Masters in Creative Documentary) 'MDC' at the Pompeu Fabra University is noted for its innovation in pedagogical methods, and the number of award-winning films that it has facilitated. The ESCAC and the MDC are examined here as two sites of education that are key for the creation of the New Catalan Cinema, picking up where the development of a Catalan Film School during the Second Republic had been cut short.

In the context of the Second Republic and the reinstatement of the *Generalitat* after the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, the new president of Catalonia, Francesc Macià, already had plans for a Catalan national cinema. Maixenchs summarises that one of the most important things to Macià was 'the restauration, consolidation and projection of Catalan culture in all areas, […] including, of course, cinema' (Maixenchs Agustí, 2005, p. 45). In 1932 the 'First University Course in Cinema', was a series of classes and workshops given at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Barcelona, which during the second republic was called the Autonomous University of Barcelona (not to be confused with the present-day Autonomous University of Barcelona) (Maixenchs Agustí, 2005, pp. 28, 33). Thus, Barcelona looked set to develop a film industry. Maixenchs goes on to detail how this project started with bringing in film professionals who had worked in Hollywood, but of course, the whole project was cut short by the Civil War and dictatorship, during which

time the *Generalitat* was dissolved and studios and cinema production moved to Madrid, leaving Barcelona as a site of alternative filmmaking outside of the industry. The *Escuela Oficial de Cinematografía* (Official School of Cinema), which was a training ground for filmmakers during the Franco regime, closed in 1976 with the educational reform laws brought in after his death, and there was a subsequent vacuum in audio-visual training all over Spain (Maixenchs Agustí, 2005, pp. 87, 286). The *Zine eta Bideo Eskola* / *Escuela de Cine y Video* (School of Film and Video) 'ESCIVI' in Andoian, the Basque Country, and the *Escuela de Cine en Barcelona* (Barcelona Film School) 'ECIB' opened in 1986, but the general lack of audio-visual training contributed to the problems that the Spanish film industry faced in the 1980s. It was not until the 1990s, and in the context of renewed enthusiasm for creating a commercial national cinema surrounding the GATT discussions and the replacement of the 'Ley Miró' with the 'Ley Alborch', that audio-visual education became a priority once again in both Spain and Catalonia.

The Department of Culture in the *Generalitat* and Sitges City Council developed a plan to convert Sitges into 'la ciudad del cine' (Cinema City) through a collaboration between the University of Barcelona (which had held the first university course on cinema) and the Bosch i Gimpera Foundation as a way of assuring the connections between academia and commerce (Maixenchs Agustí, 2005, p. 289). These plans to revive the Catalan film industry coupled with an emphasis on audio-visual education, creating the triangular relationship between the administration, higher education, and industry which characterises much of the New Catalan Cinema.

This idea of a 'Cinema City' in Catalonia was not new, and plans bore resemblance to the 1960s 'Esplugas city', a centre of production for Spaghetti Westerns in the 1960s just outside of Barcelona (de España and Jaun i Babot, 2005). The plans for Sitges to become a 'Cinema City' never came to fruition, despite the *Festival Internacional de Cinema Fantàstic de Catalunya* (Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival) being based there

since 1968. However, investment in the industry in the 2000s meant that the *Parc Audiovisual de Catalunya* (Audio-visual Park of Catalonia) was set up in Terrassa in 2007, and the ESCAC has now joined them there in something resembling the 'Cinema City'. The ESCAC began awarding official university degrees in cinema and audio-visual education, and the school's own production company, Escándolo Films, began producing the debut feature length films of alumni, as part of their 'Opera prima' (Debut) programme in 2007. Lekuona explains the objectives of the ESCAC, Escándolo Films, and the Opera Prima programme.

> We have three main objectives; to capture, nurture and promote talent. Capturing talent takes form in the summer schools and short or occasional courses the attract the young people who want to make films. In fact, we invest 20 per cent of the budget in grants for those who don't have the resources to study. The nurturing of talent is therefore the school, the degree. Then, there is the promotion of talent. We believe that a good school in this area needs to help people enter the audio-visual sector. For this reason, Opera Prima was born; to facilitate that first step from shorts to features, and then into industry.
>
> (Lekuona, 2015)

Escándolo Films co-produced their first feature as part of the *Opera prima* programme, *Lo mejor de mi* (The best of me) (Rosa Aguilar, 2006), with *Televisió de Catalunya*, and the film received some international attention from Locarno film festival and the *Cinespaña* festival in Toulouse. However, in 2009 the school's connection to industry was consolidated when they coproduced *Tres dies amb la família* (*Tres días con la familia,* 'Three Days with the Family') (Mar Coll, 2009) with Wanda Vision and *Televisió de Catalunya* with financial support from both Spanish and Catalan public funding bodies. Mar Coll was a director from the first cohort of students at the ESCAC in 1998, which included JA Bayona, Kike Maíllo and the aforementioned Rosa Aguilar, all of whom have return to teach there on occasion. Bayona had proposed *El Orfanato* to Sergi Casamitjana, the director of Escándolo Films and now also the director of ESCAC, but Lekuona states that 'there was a moment at which they realised that to make *El Orfanato*, they needed more money, so when Guillermo del Toro came on board [whom Bayona had met

previously at Sitges film festival in 1993], Casamitjana stepped aside' (Lekuona, 2015). After this, they chose films such as *Lo mejor de mí* and *Trés dias con la familia* because, as Casamitjana puts it, they 'wanted to make more arty films' (Abril, 2013).

Despite choosing to make more arty films, in 2011 they coproduced the sci-fi *Eva* (Maíllo, 2011) with Canal Plus, Television Española, Wild Bunch and Saga Productions as executives, along with public funds from the ICAA and the ICEC. Lekuona states that *Eva* was made during that period of time in the mid-2000s when Spanish public subsidies were directed toward a few big budget features rather than lots of smaller ones (Lekuona, 2015). This was because of the aforementioned Spanish 'Ley de cine' (2007) which directed a portion of funds for production in autonomous languages to be distributed in Catalonia by the ICEC, and the *Generalitat's* trial separation of language and culture in audio-visual policy that meant subsidies could be gained from both the 'linguistic normalization' funds and the 'audio-visual' funds by complying with certain economic and cultural criteria. Thus, in line with the ideology of the Catalan department of Culture at the end of the 2000s, the 'original version' of *Eva* was in Catalan, although more copies were in Castilian. Other films to be made in this way were *Herois (Heroes)* (Freixas, 2010), *Bruc*; *la llegenda (Bruc; el desafío, Bruc; The Manhunt)* (Benmayor, 2010) and *Pa negre (Pan negro, Black Bread)* (Villaronga, 2010), of which *Pa negre* is the only one generally associated with its original linguistic version. However, this proliferation of genre films in Catalan, combined with increased support for Catalan-language screenings is reflected in the viewing figures; the audience for Catalan language film doubled between 2020 and 2011 (EFE, 2011).

Lekuona states that after *Eva*, the effects of the economic crisis and the subsequent rise of the *IVA cultural* (cultural tax) along with a general sense that a film school should be supporting smaller projects, meant that Escándolo Films begins to specialise in research and development projects and produces small or no-budget films such as *Otel.lo ('*Othello*')* (Al Rahmoun Font, 2013). ESCAC Films was created to produce larger projects such as

Animals (Fores, 2012) and *Tots volem el millor per a ella (Todos queremos el mejor para ella,* 'We all want the best for her') (Coll, 2013), although divisions between ESCAC Films and Escándolo films are not clear-cut. No feature films have been produced by the ESCAC since 2013, but along with the MDC, it is possible their contribution to the New Catalan Cinema was as much in the films they produced as in the innovative connections between education, industry and the administration given the critical and commercial success of these features.

Unlike the ESCAC, the UPF does not produce films, as each film to be 'facilitated' by the MDC has a different independent production company and the finance comes from outside the university, usually from one of the TV channels with which an agreement has been made (Balló, 2015). The Masters is two years long and consists of three modules: theory, personal project and group project. On the group project module the students develop feature documentaries and, generally, each cohort makes three features (Balló, 2015). The students are divided up between these three features and they work on them with an established director who may or may not have previously done this course, and sometimes other industry professionals. In this, it represents the attempts of the First University Course in 1932 to use established filmmakers as teaching staff. The Personal Project module ends with a live pitching session, and the idea of this module is more traditional in that it allows the students to develop a film that they can then take out into the world and find their own producers, but with the experience of already having worked on a real feature film in the group module. At the pitching session the director of the Masters, Jordi Balló, also has the right to choose one of these projects to become the group project for a future cohort, with the filmmaker attached (Balló, 2015). *La leyenda del tiempo* ('The Legend of Time') (Isaki Lacuesta, 2006) and *Mercado de futuros* (*Futures Contract)* (Mercedes Álvarez, 2011) were initially presented as personal projects, but then became group projects whose production was facilitated by the MDC.

The reasons this course was started are linked to what Balló describes as a desire 'to show that an educational institution is capable of changing the dynamic of a cinematography of a country' (Balló, 2015). He thought that it would be impossible to provide high quality training in documentary filmmaking without films to use as a point of reference. So, because in Catalonia and Spain there were not many documentary films at that time, Ballò and his colleagues at the Pompeu Fabra decided that they needed to make these films with the first cohort (Balló, 2015). They invited established directors Jean Louis Comolli, Joaquin Jordà, and José Luis Guerín, and with that first cohort they made *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* ('Buenaventura Durrutti, anarchist') (Comolli, 1999) *En Construcción* ('Work in Progress')(Guerín, 2001) and *Mones com la Becky (Monos como Becky,* 'Monkeys like Becky*)*(Jordà, 1999). *Mones com la Becky* and *En Construcción* are particularly emblematic of the New Catalan Cinema and have travelled the world and been studied from aesthetic points of view by scholars of cinema. With the excellent critical and modest commercial success of these films, Balló and the team convinced everyone that a university could only provide training in filmmaking if it was also producing films for a public audience. The MDC has facilitated the production of twenty-four feature documentaries for general release, which, like *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción,* have garnered attention for the way in which they push the boundaries of documentary filmmaking.

What is most evident about the beginnings of the MDC and the ESCAC, and the subsequent development of a New Catalan Cinema, is that they did not arise because of the audio-visual or educational policies of the *Generalitat*, but rather because of a desire for change and development among existing and aspiring filmmakers as well as academics and professionals, at a local level. This is also true of the filmmaking community in Barcelona more generally at the beginning of the millennium. A significant moment for the revival of commercial genre filmmaking in Catalonia and Spain was when American producer Brian

Yuzna and Filmax executive Julio Fernández forged the 'Fantastic Factory' label in 1998. In fact, Nicholas Schlegel cites Fantastic Factory as 'the first major development for reviving [Spanish] horror as a more viable genre for production' because it 'boosted internal consistency and employed new Spanish talent in front of and behind the camera, and was a successful international distributor' (Schlegel, 2015, p. 170). At Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival in 1998, when he and Yuzna met, Fernández stated that the aim was to 'prove that world class products of interest to everyone can be made in Barcelona', adding that 'we want that one day the history of cinema will explain that Spain, Catalonia, Europe, have contributed to the revolution of the fantastic genre' (Comas, 2010, p. 110; 318). The products of Fantastic Factory were 'specialised in English language horror films shot by largely Spanish crew for the international market' (Hutchings, 2009, p. 114). The Yuzna-Filmax partnership may have ended in 2006 but the fact that both Jaume Balagueró and Paco Plaza directed Fantastic productions early in their careers before going to produce Filmax's most profitable franchise, the *[·REC]* series, confirms that the roots of New Cinema were not in policies, but rather in the filmmaking community, whatever their mode of choice. The policies were created almost after the fact, in order to support the New Catalan Cinema that had begun to proliferate, but which needed a network to support the formal development of an industry.

Gradually, organisations already supporting the film industry in Barcelona began to formalise and new organisations were set up during the 2000s. The sector swelled with increasing numbers of film professionals, and the number of shoots taking place in Barcelona and Catalonia increased annually. The *Institut Ramon Llull*, whose network incorporates universities across the world, is an institution with the stated aim of 'projecting and disseminating the Catalan languages and cultures in all their manifestations' (*Inici - Institut Ramon Llull – Llengua i cultura catalanes*, no date). However, the *Institut Ramon Llull* has no hand in the generation of cultural products, only their promotion, and

so functions as to project Catalan cinema to the world. Barcelona also houses a Europa Creativa office; The Catalan MEDIA desk. It is a particularly active office and, in collaboration with the *Generalitat*, has created an online database of all European films that have received MEDIA funding, the amount they received, and the awards they have won, or been nominated for (MEDIA, no date). The MEDIA office in Brussels could not fund the project, which required the cooperation of all MEDIA desks, so the *Generalitat* used the money it received from *Europa Creativa* to run the Barcelona MEDIA office to pay for it (Navarro Garrich, 2015). As a result of this support from the *Generalitat,* the database has a significant focus on Catalan productions to have received MEDIA funding, and the involvement of the *Generalitat* is clear on the webpage, which further helps to fulfil one of the *Generalitat*'s aims of increased international visibility and participation in European cultural life. This demonstrates the place and function of Catalonia and Catalan national cinema within a European transnational network. However, the same cannot be said for the Spanish and Latin American transnational cinematic networks such as *Ibermedia*, which functions much more as a grouping of nation states, rather than regional desks, as does MEDIA.

Catalan Films is another organisation that has the objective of promoting the Catalan audio-visual sector, supporting increased distribution, and generating opportunities for international co-production, on which they work with the Barcelona-Catalunya Film Commission. As part of this, they also run the 'Catalan Films Database', which has a wealth of information on Catalan productions and co-productions, individuals, and audio-visual companies, all contactable, all up to date, all free to access, and all available in English. On this website there is also a downloadable PDF document of all Catalan productions and co-productions for release in the current year, with synopses and production information. Like the Academy, and MEDIA, it keeps track of Catalan films at different festivals around the world, and they release semi-regular publications on the

benefits of coproducing with Catalonia, funded by the *Generalitat* (Catalan Films & TV, Generalitat and Catalunya Film Commission, 2016).

These institutions and organisations operate on different levels and in different ambits, so in 2008 the *Acadèmia del Cinema Català* was created to provide some sort of coherence. This is not unlike the context in which the *Spanish Academia de las Artes y Ciencias Cinematográficas* was set up in 1985.

> The role that this professional organization [The Spanish Film Academy] had in securing cultural legitimacy for Spanish cinema cannot be underestimated. It is in the combination of good press that Spanish productions were obtaining through their successes in the 1980s and research and archivist projects on which the Academia embarked that Spain arrived in the late 1990s with a national cinema legitimated as an object of study and research.
>
> (Triana-Toribio, 2014, p. 74)

The presence of an academy, along with the Barcelona and Catalonia Film Commissions and the multi-layered subsidy system in Catalonia because of the overlap between Spanish and Catalan film policy, made the prospect of coproducing with Catalan companies attractive. The *Acadèmia del Cinema Català* was specifically formed with the objective of becoming 'the united voice of Catalan cinematography', in order to effectively support, promote, and internationalise Catalan cinema (Acadèmia del Cinema Català 2009, p.5, 13). These objectives are in line with the aims and set out in the aforementioned *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals.* Especially relevant for this discussion is that among the 'twelve founding principles' of the Academy there is one which reads, 'to intervene in policy-making related to subsidies or cinematography' (Acadèmia del Cinema Català, 2009, p. 13). Therefore, although the Academy cannot make policies, it is an institution that has the remit of influencing policymaking. Significant crossover between the Academy and the *Generalitat* grants the Academy some authority over the identity of Catalan cinema. It also means that Catalan cinema, like Spanish cinema, straddles the private and public sphere.

The creation of an academy, as well as the *Filmoteca de Catalunya* that mirror the Spanish academy and *Filmoteca* reinforces the concept of a plurinational Spanish cinema made up of a network of smaller cinemas that was explored in the literature review. Furthermore, it marks out Barcelona as the centre of Catalan-language film. Other Catalan-speaking regions have tried to emulate the success of the Barcelona and Catalonia Film Commissions in their audio-visual sectors, although with less success. The Balearic Film Commission would be an example of this, having been setup an closed down again numerous times because of a lack of financial support from the Balearic government (Mallorca International Film Festival, 2016). Reflecting the efforts of the Academy to curate the Catalan national cinema as an international calling card, the Catalan Film Academy was accepted into the Film Academies Network of Europe in 2013, the first and only academy in this group that represents the cinema of a stateless nation.

Joel Joan Juve, a publicly pro-independence figure, was founding member and first president of the Academy. He is a well-known television and film actor in Catalonia and appears in *Salvador (Puig Antich)* (Manuel Huerga, 2006) who moved into directing and producing with *Fènix 11.23* (Joel Joan & Sergi Lara, 2012). *Fènix 11.23* won seven awards at the *Premis Gaudí* in 2013, the year that presidency was handed over to Isona Passola, another pro-independence director and founder of the production company Massa D'Or, which was behind the multi award winning and internationally distributed *Pa negre*. As a director, she has directed two documentaries that address the issue of independence; *Cataluña-Espanya* (Isona Passola, 2009) and *L'endemà* ('The day after') (Passola, 2014). The resulting authority that the Academy exerts over the image of Catalan cinema is perhaps most obvious at the awards ceremony, the *Premis Gaudí*.[10] The present view of the Academy on the relationship between cinema and nation is made very clear in Isona

[10] In 2009 the *Premis Gaudí* replaced the 'Premis Barcelona', which were organised by the *Col.legi de directors*, and organisation set up in 1986 and presided over by well-known directors such as Bigas Luna, Francesc Bellmunt, Carles Balagué, and Joel Joan before he got involved in setting up the Academy

Passola's speeches at the 2014 and 2015 Gaudi awards. At the 2014 awards, she stresses that states should support their cinemas.

> All over Europe we know that cinema is an issue for the state. Why is it a state issue? Because, as we repeat again and again, [nation] states know that cinema articulates the culture of a country to the world. Cinema is the most powerful business card, and nowadays we have to support cinema because more than ever we need the world to understand us. However, unfortunately, the Spanish state has not made cinema an issue, and as such, we are in the middle of a very difficult moment. Subsidies have fallen, there is a 21 per cent tax on cine tickets, the Spanish state is the world champion of piracy showing that we don't respect the rights of authors, and television channels are not able to coproduce.
>
> ('VI Premis Gaudí: Isona Passola's speech', 2014)

In this speech she also 'welcomes' the debate of the aforementioned telecommunications tax in parliament, and pleads with the *Generalitat* and TV3 to remember that Catalan cinema relies on co-producing with televisions and public subsidies, to make those films which present Catalan culture to the world, appealing to the 'internationalisation' aspect of the campaign for independence by *Convergència i Unió*. In 2015, the introductory sequence to the awards ceremony reminds us that the telecommunications tax still has not brought results and in her speech Passola once again reminds the *Generalitat* and the *Conseller de Cultura* that 'without cinema there is no nation' ('VII Premis Gaudí', 2015). The 2014 Gaudí Awards coincided with a general strike at *Televisió de Catalunya* (TV3), and were therefore televised by BTV, a smaller, private channel. At a time when the academy was complaing of less and less cooperation from TV3, this only served to further ignite tensions.

Conclusion

The chapter on institutions and policies has examined a series of significant events, policies and institutions that together provide a contextual framework in which the New Catalan Cinema develops. However, the development of this framework does not have a clear beginning or linear development and is often characterised by a difference in opinion between filmmakers and the *Generalitat*. Therefore, there are a number of points at which

the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema could be placed. It could be when the *Escola Superior de Cinema i Audiovisuals a Catalunya* (ESCAC) opened; the first Catalan film school since the second republic. However, the necessary conditions had to be in place before films were made by the first cohort. A significant date could also be 1998, when the controversial 'Llei de política lingüística' (Act of Linguistic policy) (article 28, act 3) sets out the quota for the dubbing and subtitling into Catalan of Hollywood imports. However, the reactions to this are perhaps more significant than the law itself and in 2000 at the *Primer cicle del cinema català* in Sabadell, the sector's opposition to linguistic quotas in cinema was made known. This led to an apparent change of heart in the *Generalitat* about the place of the Catalan language in the New Catalan Cinema when they set up the *Institut Català de les industries culturals* (Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries) 'ICIC' in 2000; an equally important moment for the beginning of New Catalan Cinema. It could even be as late as in 2003 when the *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* foresaw the trial separation of language and culture. Subsequently the 'Llei de communicació audiovisual de Catalunya' (Broadcasting act of Catalonia) in 2005 saw much greater economic support for Catalan films as those which are made in Catalonia, rather than those which are in the Catalan language. Alongside the Spanish 'Ley de cine' this created a wealth of financial support for Catalan films and Catalan language films and could therefore be cited as the beginning of New Catalan Cinema.

In addition to this, the discussion of institutions shows that solely focussing on policies omits a large part of the equation from which the New Catalan Cinema was born and developed. Cinematic institutions such as the Academy have been instrumental in the maintenance of a cohesive identity for the New Catalan Cinema and its projection abroad as a national cinema. Furthermore, in both documentary and genre filmmaking communities at the turn of the millennium, which do not operate in isolation from each other, there was a perceptible drive towards developing new aesthetics, models of

production, and transnational partnerships, all of which are key to the development of Catalan cinema. Educational institutions were instrumental for this, and for these reasons the following chapters proceed to examine the beginning and development of New Catalan Cinema in different modes of filmmaking. Chapter three focuses on three films and the context in which they were made, that can be understood as catalytic for the documentary movement. Chapter four examines the development of documentary in relation to the concept of an identifiable *cinema barceloní* in documentary. Chapter five focuses on the development of genre cinema which in the mid-2000s can clearly be related to an identifiable *cinema català*, and chapter six examines the trajectory of horror cinema, specifically in relation to ideas of transnational cinema.

Chapter Three

Creative Documentary at the Turn of the Millennium: The Beginnings of New Catalan Cinema

Introduction

> When trying to map out the current richness of the Catalan documentary genre, one should emphasize the formation of three more or less independent schools: the creative documentary backed by the new academic programs at the Pompeu Fabra and the Universitat Autònoma in Barcelona, the variations upon the traditional journalistic formats practised by many professionals working for television stations and the most experimental output of new filmmakers working from and with new technologies.
>
> (Martí Olivella, 2013, p. 53)

This chapter is dedicated to examining the aesthetic characteristics of the creative documentary strand of the New Catalan Cinema, and the contexts within which these characteristics were formed. Thus, a discussion of the significant changes in production, reception and aesthetics precedes the analysis of three films that can be understood as representing the beginning of this wave of creative documentaries; *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* ('Buenaventura Durrutti, anarchist')(Jean Louis Comolli 1999), *Mones com la Becky (Monos como Becky, Monkeys like Becky)* (Jordà, 1999), and *En construcción* (Guerín, 2001). These films were made before the changes in policy that characterise the New Catalan Cinema, but, because they were made on the Masters in Creative Documentary at the Pompeu Fabra University and thus served as training grounds for future filmmakers such as Isaki Lacuesta, Mercedes Álvarez, Carla Subirana and Neus Ballús, they are most relevant to understanding the aesthetics of second generation creative documentarians in a Catalan context.

Aesthetically and thematically, these three films are far from homogenous. However, they all focus on one thing; the blurring of reality and fiction. As noted by Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas, this was also an aesthetic characteristic of Catalan documentaries before it

became a hallmark of more global documentary boom of the 1990s-2000s.

> The testimonial function of Catalan documentary, initially dominant in the late 1970s, was gradually overtaken by films which challenged the 'reportage effect', either by exploiting the conventions of the fiction film (as in Camino's *La vieja memoria*) or by passing off obviously staged actions events and scenes as direct reporting.
>
> (Jordan & Morgan-Tamosunas 1998, p.161)

It may seem odd to include this seemingly negative appraisal of the aesthetic that characterises contemporary Catalan documentary. However, given that they wrote it just before the wave of creative documentaries that would come to define the New Catalan Cinema were made, it serves to highlight the similarities and differences between documentary filmmaking in Catalonia before and after 1999. Among the similarities is an aesthetic that contemporary films and those associated with the Barcelona school often explore; the space between fact and fiction. Rosalind Galt perhaps provides the best explanation of aesthetic links between the Barcelona school and the creative documentaries of today when she writes in 2006 that, 'while for the most part, the [Barcelona] School is contextualised in terms of the history of fiction art cinema, it might be more useful to locate it in terms of an experimental cinema that assumes neither fiction nor documentary' (Galt 2006). In the contemporary time period, Lacuesta prefers to distinguish between 'written' and 'unwritten' film, and Guerín distinguishes between 'planned' and 'unplanned' shoots (Ehrlich, 2014, p. 433).

Furthermore, there is an emphasis on linguistic verisimilitude in both movements which results in multilingual films, rather than Catalan language films. Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas observe that 'among members of the Escuela de Barcelona, there existed no explicit commitment to filming in Catalan' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 157). The majority of documentaries made after 1999 also feature two or more languages. However, the major difference between Catalan documentaries before and after 1999 is

found in production and reception.

Production

In production, the constant growth in annual production numbers serves to highlight the documentary boom in Catalonia. Between 1982 and 1998 there were between zero and three feature-length documentaries made annually in Catalonia, making up between 0 and 11 per cent of total productions (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 44). However, from 1999 this figure began to increase steadily each year and by 2010, there were 39 feature-length documentaries, making up 38 per cent of all productions, (José i Solsona, 2013, p. 44). So, documentary occupied an increasingly larger percentage of total annual production figures as they also increased. The director of the Masters in Documentary Creation, Jordi Balló, expands on the combination of Barcelona and documentary filmmaking as central to the success of the MDC, stating that 'in Barcelona documentary filmmaking is a central, rather than secondary, career path' and that at the end of the 1990s, 'directors associated with auteur and independent cinema saw an opportunity in documentary cinema to be able to explain their worlds' (Balló, 2015). The changes in Spanish audio-visual policy in the 1990s may have brought good results for Spanish genre cinema, but this left television as the main site of documentary filmmaking. Comas writes that this was at the detriment of artistically ambitious projects.

> Almost no one was taking the risk of doing something new, and they were definitely not experimenting. On top of this, because the final destination of many films was a television broadcast (thanks to the entry of the televisions into coproduction negotiations), this undoubtedly conditions the formal and thematic conservatism; they think about the television audience and not the cinema audience, who are normally more demanding.
>
> (Comas, 2010, p. 142)

Speaking about the main factors that contribute to the evolution of the documentary wave on a more global scale since the 1990s in an interview conducted in 2009, Chanan points to

the development of new technologies and an appetite for watching this kind of 'low-budget, intimate filmmaking […] which is not satisfied by commercial distributors or television' (Mamblona, 2012). It is in this context of opposition that the creative documentary of the New Catalan Cinema is born, which is perhaps why discourses around Madrid and Barcelona as oppositional sites of filmmaking reoccur during this early period of the New Catalan Cinema. However, later in the decade, the creative documentary would not be the only characteristic of the New Catalan Cinema, but rather, one of many. In 2015 Balló opines that 'genre cinema is alive, there is *[·REC]* and that tradition of cinema, and later *Pa negre* and all of this history, but here the best have found a freedom of creation in documentary cinema that also creates profit' (Balló, 2015).

Comas and Torreiro expand upon the importance of a setting like Barcelona for this kind of filmmaking to flourish. Torreiro expands on three key factors for the 'unexpected bloom of works, the debut of professionals and, fragile as it may be, the existence of a minimal industrial infrastructure that, going beyond the practice of self-producing […] has made this apparent miracle of consistent growth in production possible' (Torreiro, 2010, p. 33). Firstly, the 'decided investment from the television broadcasters'. Secondly, the 'diffusion of an audio-visual culture in general, but specifically of non-fiction cinema with its origins in a university setting,'. Thirdly, 'the long history of maverick filmmakers who have sporadically brought documentary into their field of work, or who have constructed their filmography primarily around non-fiction' (Torreiro, 2010, pp. 33–34). Comas writes that Barcelona is; 'without a doubt the capital of Spanish documentary film, because here it is considered as a mode of filmmaking that can transform cinema, and the universities, film schools, television channels, public administration and part of the industry support it' (Comas, 2010, p. 57).

Expanding on how the industry in Barcelona can be seen as supporting a documentary boom, Torreiro writes that 'the Catalan production sector, overwhelmingly made up of

small and medium independent companies, has known how to adapt to the peculiarities of the documentary filmmaking process' (Torreiro, 2010, p. 7). We can assume that by 'peculiarities' he means that whereas genre productions generally have their scripts finalised long before the filming begins, documentary filmmaking has no script and so demands more flexibility from production companies. These observations on partial industrial support for documentary cinema in Catalonia recall the statement by Cubeles in the *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* (White paper for the cultural industries) that, 'even though Catalonia is the second centre of audio visual production in Spain, it is distanced from the Community of Madrid by a serious inequality in the agglomeration of cinematographic activity by large-scale corporations' (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2002, p. 18). Cubeles may have seen this as a negative for the development of an audio-visual industry but clearly Comas and Torreiro see it as positive for the development of an avant-garde cinema located at the crossroads between industry and education.

As the discussion of institutions in chapter two demonstrates, the Masters in Creative Documentary (MDC) at the Pompeu Fabra University was central to the beginning of the contemporary creative documentary. On this course, students work with an established filmmaker and an external production company on a film financed by television channels. These films often go on to become the most successful creative documentaries, and the three films discussed in this chapter were produced that way. Balló and Comas both emphasise the intergenerational element in this educational setting as central to the current movement and as what differentiates from the Barcelona School. Filmmaker Isaki (given name Iñaki) Lacuesta, a student on the first cohort, states that until his death in 2006, Jordà could have been understood as the father figure of '*la gran familia'* (the big family), as he would work closely with younger filmmakers on the MCD and elsewhere, breaking down the traditional barriers between teachers and students (Comas 2010, p.58, Balló 2015). Thus, in the contemporary movement it makes more sense to speak of a community

of filmmakers or a movement, rather than the auteurs of the *Escola de Barcelona*, which was a coherent movement in name only.

Expanding upon how television has been central to the creative documentary in Catalonia, Balló explains firstly that the aesthetic was born out of a reaction to the tendency of television channels at the time to opt for more journalistic documentaries for their factual programming. Therefore, one objective of theirs was to try and return documentary film to the cinema through achieving critical success at festivals (Balló, 2015). However, they needed money from somewhere to be able to make the films, so Balló approached the French-German Arte and French Canal Plus, who liked the idea of renovating the documentary format for cinema and agreed to finance the projects. Involving foreign investment and support in the creation of a new aesthetic and production model for documentary in Barcelona, as well as aiming the product at international festivals, is a clear example of Labanyi and Pavlović's observation that 'the cinema production of Spain's autonomous communities has made innovative connections between the local and the transnational, bypassing the national by aligning with world markets' (Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, p. 3). However, after the Spanish public broadcaster *Televisión española* (TVe) underwent structural changes in 2007, they also entered into the production of documentaries on the MDC. Balló did not approach *Televisió de Catalunya* (TV3) because he thought it would be disloyal to other production companies based in Catalonia looking for finance. Despite this, he adds that, 'but the reality is that TV3 have supported ninety per cent of these films anyway, because they like them, and they are on board with what we do' (Balló, 2015). As is evident from these arrangements, these documentaries don't completely bypass the national to align with world markets. Rather, they can be located at the juncture between Catalan, Spanish and global as well as between television, the film industry, and education. Howver, there is an emphasis using the international dimension to characterise this movement.

> Before, in the 60s, that which defined the identity of a movement was that it belonged to a specific place; The Barcelona School, The New Spanish Cinema, Free Cinema, Czech cinema. Whereas now, I get the impression that people feel as close to those who work by their side as they do to those working far away, and the idea of fraternity, that you identify as belonging to a group of filmmakers, is much more transnational.
>
> (Balló 2015)

While Balló makes a good point about previous movements belonging to specific locations, even then they were not isolated. It is possible to frame the *Escola de Barcelona* as spatially and temporally located in a binary Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy with *el nuevo cine español* (The New Spanish Cinema). However, the *Escola de Barcelona* can also be placed in a wider discussion of European new wave cinemas of the late sixties and early seventies. Summarising Esteve Rimbau and Casimiro Torreiro, Galt writes that 'the [Barcelona] School can be understood as one of these new waves, conceptually linked to Free Cinema, the Nouvelle Vague, the Czech New Wave and so on', and that this can be seen in stylistic and thematic overlaps (Galt, 2006). Similarly, the creative documentaries of the New Catalan cinema may be seen as an alternative to the emphasis on genre production in Madrid during the 1990s by some, but they can also be linked to the wider documentary boom occurring in other countries, demonstrating that concepts of the national limit discussion. Howevever understanding the national (however complicated that may be in this case) within a global context can be useful for analysing reception.

Reception

The position of contemporary Catalan creative documentary cinema at the juncture between television, the film industry, and education at Catalan, Spanish and transnational levels also grants the films access to exhibition platforms outside of Catalonia. Coinciding with a period of time in which aesthetic experimentation in documentary film practice is occurring internationally, the creative documentaries made in Barcelona tap into wider

trends and this arguably facilitates their improved reception. Martí Olivella elaborates on how the reception of Catalan documentary has changed.

> […] there is not a unique and new documentary school in contemporary Catalan cinema. In fact, the documentary genre has a solid tradition in Catalonia. What is new is the cultural centrality achieved by a number of significant films and filmmakers working in or around the parameters of the documentary genre.
>
> (Martí Olivella, 2013, p. 53)

In his book on the politics of documentary, Michael Chanan writes that although the new documentary wave or 'documentary boom' is recognised as an international phenomenon, certain places are key to this movement, and he uses Spain as an example of 'a site of unseen documentary innovation' (Chanan, 2007, p. 3).

> Spain is a case in point, because here for more than a decade, there has been a wave of documentaries entering the cinema which only achieve foreign distribution very selectively, but nonetheless include some of the finest and most interesting examples of the new documentary anywhere in the world – *El Sol de membrillo*, the study of a painter at work on a canvas; *Monos como Becky*, about the treatment of psychiatric disorders; and *En construcción*, about urban redevelopment in Barcelona.
>
> (Chanan, 2007, p. 3)

Chanan's observation that these films only achieve foreign distribution selectively might appear to contradict Martí Olivella's statement that many of these films have achieved 'cultural centrality'. However, given the negative reception that earlier Catalan creative documentaries received, the fact that he cites *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción* as two examples of documentary innovation in Spain highlights the change in international reception of Catalan documentaries. In terms of box office, Catalan documentaries draw far more returns abroad than they do in Spain or Catalonia. Foreign box office returns for Catalan documentaries between 2000 and 2009 are usually between seventy-one and eighty-four per cent of the total. In keeping with this trend, foreign box office returns for *Mones com la Becky* and *En Construcción* were seventy-one and seventy-nine per cent respectively, showing that these films are more sucessful abroad than with the domestic

audience, whether 'domestic' is understood as Spanish or Catalan[11]

The aesthetic of the contemporary films working 'around the parameters of documentary' may have their roots in the *Escola de Barcelona*, but it is not until the late 1990s and early 2000s when a fascination with 'docufiction' was occurring across the world that this aesthetic would find the right conditions for development, as well as its audience. Referring to the films discussed in section one of the book *(Re)viewing Creative, Commerical and Critical Practices in Contemporary Spanish Cinema* (Wheeler and Canet, 2014), many of which are creative documentaries, Wheeler demonstrates the centrality of Catalonia for this mode of filmmaking.

> '[…] there can be no doubt that Catalonia has been at the epicentre of the general resurgence in Spain's art cinema over the last decade or so, however that nebulous term is defined'
>
> (Wheeler, 2014, p. 16)

However, complications arise when referring to these films as 'Catalan' and having their epicentre in 'Catalonia'. In his edited book that focuses on the crossover between reality and fiction in 'the contemporary Catalan documentary' Torreiro stresses that this kind of cinema should more accurately be called '*el documental barcelonés'* ('Barcelonian' documentary), reminding us that it is tricky to assume that Barcelona represents the rest of Catalonia and the *països catalans,* given the fragmented and delicate nature of the relationship between this centre and its peripheries, as discussed in chapter two (Torreiro, 2010, p. 45).

The New Aesthetic

Esteve Riambau suggests that the year 1999 marks a change for Catalan documentary in his chapter 'Cuando los monos aún no eran como Becky; El documental catalán antes de 1999' ('When the monkeys were still not like Becky; Catalan documentary before 1999')

[11] Percentages calculated from data in Comas (2010), which was gathered from ICIC.

(Riambau, 2010). He summarises the history of the documentary in Catalonia as having four main time periods, and it is clear that he sees the dissolving of boundaries between documentary and fiction as a distinctive feature of the contemporary time period, despite Jordan and Morgan Tamosunas' earlier observation.

a) The Civil War, whose documentary record on behalf of the *Generalitat*'s news bulletins would provide material for footage in later films about the content and conscience of a policy of public subsidies defended in the reclaiming of the Catalan identity.
b) The *Escola de Barcelona*; following the proclamation, 'now that we cannot make Victor Hugo, we will make Mallarmé'[a phrase later attributed to Jordà], filmmakers proceed to move towards experimental and militant cinema and we find the realist origins of the contemporary aesthetic.
c) During the Transition to Democracy, the recuperation of historical memory and certain social circles and politics that had been until then prohibited from the big screen.
d) The dissolving of boundaries between documentary and fiction though a series of fusions that anticipate the 'boom' that occurs after *Mones com la Becky*.

(Riambau, 2010, p. 12)

The creative documentaries of the New Catalan Cinema have in many cases become emblematic of the New Catalan Cinema itself, and although this may suggest a mode of filmmaking with a homogeneous aesthetic or approach, upon viewing some creative documentaries made after 1999 it becomes clear that this is far from true. It is not only possible to speak of two generations of directors within the creative documentary aspect of the New Catalan Cinema but also of two different schools of filmmaking within the MDC

itself. Torreiro writes that ‘in Catalan circles of non-fiction filmmaking they began to talk about the existence of, ‘“two schools”: two lines of development that explain the rise of the documentary in this period of time; one emanating from Jordà while the other would be represented by the lessons of the other prestigious teacher in those early moments; José Luis Guerín’ (Torreiro, 2010, p. 45). Jordà is also quoted by Comella Dorda as saying, “The truth is that at the Pompeu Fabra there are two points of reference, one is myself and the other is Guerín, even though we are very different. To a certain extent following the model of Víctor Erice, he makes a film every ten years, whereas I try and make one every three months.” (Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 175). In fact, As Lluis Moreno Caballud points out, ‘the prolific and influential trajectories and styles of Jordà and Guerín can be used as guides for identifying two main trends in recent non fictional Spanish film’ (Moreno-Caballud, 2014, p. 62).

As Quintana summarises, ‘the ‘indefinite’ nature of Catalan cinema is exactly what has come to define it’, and this is evident in many discussions of the Catalan creative documentary (Quintana, 2014, p. 11). Writing in 2006, Éduoard Waintrop highlights the fact that the ‘*néonéorealisme catalan’* (Catalan ‘neoneorealism’) explores boundaries between fiction and documentary (Waintrop, 2006). He cites *En construcción (Work in Progress)* (José Luis Guerín 2001), *El cielo gira* (*The Sky Turns)* (Mercedes Alvarez, 2004) and *El taxista ful (The Taxi Thief)* (Jo Sol, 2005) as exemplary of this trait, as well as highlighting the centrality of the *Universitat Pompeu Fabra* (UPF) and Jordi Balló to the development of a movement ‘freed from industry’ (Waintrop, 2006). In 2010, Comas describes the ‘documental de autor’ (auteur documentary) as ‘an emerging genre’ within Catalan cinema, alongside ‘fantastic’ cinema and animation (Comas, 2010, p. 55). He places the films of Jose Luis Guerín and Marc Recha alongside Dziga Vertov, Chris Marker, Raymond Depardon, Aleksandr Sokurov and Nicholas Philibert in a discussion of the border between reality and fiction in documentary filmmaking, concluding that because

of new technologies and exhibition spaces, the label 'documentary' can cover so many different themes and forms that it is becoming a potent macro genre. He writes that within this macro genre the '*documental català d'autor'* ('auteur documentary'), where fiction is a storytelling 'tool' and viewing requires active participation, is the most innovative form (Comas 2010, p.55-59).

Brice Castanon and Beatrice Comella Dorda prefer the term '*nuevo realismo catalán'* to '*documental catalán de autor'* and they focus on the role of the Pompeu Fabra University in the development of 'the prestigious Catalan documentary movement' as a site of creation and production that eschews traditional production models and provides an alternative space for production within postgraduate education, framing the MDC as a site of crossover between auteur cinema and 'cinema of the real' (Castanon, 2011; Comella Dorda, 2013 pp. 11, 13). All of these commentators recognise that using the term 'documentary' is problematic and instead liken these films to neorealism, Avant-garde cinema and art cinema, partly because of their aesthetic and partly because of the fact that they are low budget and made outside of the mainstream industry, in an educational setting. The perceived similarities between Catalan creative documentaries of the contemporary period are predominantly; a fixation on the space between documentary and fiction, multilingualism, and genre hybridity. However, there is a significant deal of variation in how these aesthetic characteristics manifest in creative documentaries. In order to understand the similarities and differences in the creative documentary aesthetic it is therefore necessary to delve deeper into an aesthetic analysis of the three films that introduced the changes. For clarity, I use the term 'creative documentary' after the title of the course on which the first three films were made.

Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista

Jean Louis Comolli, editor of *Cahiers du Cinema* between 1965 and 1973 with Jean Nabroni, was one of the first teachers on the MDC and it was he who directed the first group project, *Buenaventura Durruti, anarquista* (Comolli, 1999). Despite this, Comolli and *Buenaventura Durruti, anarquista* are not often spoken about in articles about contemporary Catalan documentary cinema, for which there are a number of possible reasons. Firstly, he is French and therefore not a Catalan filmmaker, and secondly, *Buenaventura Durruti, anarquista* did not gain distribution or travel the festival circuit and is therefore not very well known. However, as the first creative documentary of this period to have been made at the intersection between education and industry using the signature pedagogical method of the MDC, it should not be omitted from a chapter examining the contemporary roots of the creative documentary in Barcelona. Furthermore, textual analysis of this film aids a better understanding of how the aesthetics of the first three films of the MDC are later developed. As an exploration of the crossover between theatre and cinema, past and present, and documentary modes that create a self-reflexive multilingual film, *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* bears many of the characteristics that will reappear throughout the next fifteen years.

As a film theorist and filmmaker, Comolli has always been interested in the similarities and distinctions between documentary and fiction, and in an interview with *Senses of Cinema* asserts that "all fiction films are documentaries about the bodies of their actors, and no filmmaker in the history of the cinema has managed to make a film that wasn't a documentary" (Fairfax, 2012). He elaborates further that the body is central to this.

> "After having distilled the distinction between fiction and documentary, I recall having arrived at some very simple conclusions. In a fiction film, the actor acts as if the camera is not there. In a documentary film, the person who plays the role of himself cannot act as if the camera is not there."
>
> (Fairfax, 2012)

Catalan theatre has a long history and, as in many places with a small or young cinema, creative and technical personal move between the two mediums, as well as television, quite easily: Of the people discussed in this thesis; Joel Joan (*Fènix 11.23*) is a stage actor, television actor, screen actor, film producer/director, and founding member of the Catalan film academy and David Verdaguer (*10.000km*) is a television, stage and screen actor. Mostly, the cross-over is maintained within traditionally scripted media but it is in the creative documentary, and particularly in *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista,* that theatre becomes a tool for self-reflexivity.

In this film, the theatre group working on a play about Buenaventura Durruti are the famous *Els Joglars*, who have been a theatre production group since 1962 and are known for their experimentation with form on stage, initially using mime to get around the censors and later incorporating political satire. Albert Boadella, who plays their director in the film, founded this group and it is through the use of *Els Joglars* that this biography about a Spanish anarchist directed by a French filmmaker and made by students on a Masters course in Barcelona can be understood as Catalan in content, because of the centrality of *Els Joglars* to the history of Catalan theatre, despite Boadella's opposition to Catalan independence. Effectively it is a documentary about a theatre company making a production about Durruti, and therefore researching his life, which means that it is also a form of performative documentary about Durruti. This focus on theatre and the creation of a production immediately draws attention to the film's own construction, something which is supported by the presence of text on screen in the form of letters, newspaper cuttings and book pages, as well as the use of VHS. Furthermore, in the film the protagonists are theatre actors who are playing both themselves, as well as the characters from the play they are rehearsing. This is emphasised by the fact that they take it in turns to play Durruti, and reflects Comolli's aforementioned interest in the actor's body as a site of distinction between documentary in fiction. Here, this distinction is blurred, drawing attention to the

film's construction. At times it appears to be a documentary about a theatre group making a play. However, as the film goes on it pushes us to consider whether or not the theatre actors are still acting while they are not rehearsing the play and we wonder how scripted their apparently non-scripted lines are.

During the non-rehearsal moments, the theatre group reflect on the creation of the play they are making, which also functions as a reflection on the film they are making; "is this about the authentic, legend, or mask of Durruti?" "we can't go against the legend of Durruti" they wonder. Furthermore, they watch a video of Abel Paz, the author of a book about Durrutti upon which the film is 'loosely based', as it says in the end credits. Paz talks about Durruti and his comrades, and exclaims, "the actor who plays Durruti is done for! It's suicide! He must study him well." The protagonist who does end up playing Durruti (who is chosen by others, just as Durruti was chosen by others as the leader) eventually believes that he *is* Durruti, and stays visibly 'in character' when outside of rehearsals. Clearly the protagonist does not actually believe that he is Durruti, which means that even when playing 'himself', the actor is in character, but this time his character is that of a theatre actor who has become one with his character. This in turn provokes the reflection that none of the protagonists are ever out of character, but merely slip between their theatre character and their film character. This is exemplified in the protagonist who transitions from 'actor playing Durruti', to 'actor playing an actor playing Durruti', halfway through the film, jolting us into pondering the same questions as Comolli about the difference between fiction and documentary being an awareness of the camera and an ability to play oneself. However, given that the film transitions from Comolli's understanding of documentary to his understanding of fiction, it prepares the ground for the wave of films to follow that explore the space between fact and fiction from various angles.

The use of theatre to explore the space between scripted and unscripted is a trait that also marks a number of Catalan genre productions of the contemporary period, and other traits established here to later become characteristic of creative documentaries are; multilingualism, and the use of politically engaged musical performances that will be seen again in *De nens* (Jordà, 2004) and *El taxista ful* (Sol, 2005), and then later in creative documentaries from elsewhere in Spain such as *Mi querida España* (Moncada, 2015). Furthermore, in its historical exploration of anarchist resistance to Franco through performance, *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* taps into a trope that would characterise much of Catalan and Spanish film of all genres during the 2000s in the context of the recuperation of historical memory.

Mones com la Becky

Mones com la Becky premiered at Sitges International Festival of Fantastic Cinema, a genre festival. In his introduction to Comella Dorda's book, Àngel Quintana describes this premier.

> "The film was not a horror, but it was able to create a feeling of anguish in the spectator. […] Coming out of the screening, there was a sensation among the public that they had witnessed an important event. This was the screening of a work that questioned and reformulated the established idea that cinema in Catalonia, until that moment, had been hegemonic. A new and important chapter in the history of audio visual creation was about to be written."
>
> (Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 7)

Quintana was right, a new chapter was about to be written, and would be far from hegemonic, a fact attested to by the diversity of films in this thesis. Within the creative documentary mode, perhaps what *Mones com la Becky* contributes most in terms of content is the use of illness as a metaphor for social criticism, which will later reappear in the use of Alzheimer's to explore historical memory in *Nedar (Nadar*,'Swimming') (Carla Subirana 2008), *Bicicleta, cullera, poma (Bicicleta, cuchara, manzana, Bicycle, spoon,*

apple) (Carles Bosch 2010), and *Bucharest, la memòria perduda* (*Bucharest, la memoria perdida*, 'Bucharest, the lost memory') (Solé, 2008) as is written about by Martí Olivella (Martí Olivella, 2013).

However, *Mones com la Becky* also contributes much in the way of aesthetics, especially for the development of a strand of creative documentary that is politically critical such as *El Taxista Ful* (Sol, 2005). Central to this aesthetic is theatre, which as we have seen allowed Comolli to explore the boundaries between fact and fiction in *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista*. There are three main themes in *Mones com la Becky*, each of which is explored through a different modes of documentary as identified by Bill Nichols. The main themes are; the history of treating mental illness, a reflection on society's treatment of people with mental illness, and an investigation into the work of Egaz Moniz, the Portuguese Nobel prize-winning scientist who pioneered the frontal lobotomy. In the performative and participatory aspects of the film we see a group of residents at the 'Malgrat de Mar' therapeutic community researching, rehearsing and eventually performing a play about Egas Moniz with Jordà, and Jordà himself speaking about his experiences. It is this engagement with theatre that provokes reflection upon the space between scripted and unscripted, a trait shared not only with Comolli's *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista,* but also a number of films that approach this space from the fictional angle such as *Sévigné* (Balletbo Coll, 2006)*, Otel.lo* (Al Rahmoun Font, 2013) and *V.O.S* (Gay, 2009).

The use of theatre actors in *Bunaventura Durrutti, anarquista* makes this kind of reflection on the subjectivity of documentary film more obvious, but the presence of non-actors rehearsing a play about Egaz Moniz in *Mones com la Becky,* although superficially very similar to *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista,* produces a very different effect. Here, it is obvious that the protagonists are not actors, and are in fact living with the impact of Moniz's work on brain mapping and treatments for mental health issues. Close ups on

scars that suggest proximity to medical procedures and references to medication and ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) highlight the barbarism of medical practices that have been, or still are, used. Through their engagement with Jordà and his knowledge about Moniz, which is presented through the interviews in Portugal and the medical historians, the residents reflect on their own situation in relation to the history of treating mental illnesses. This is a reflection that perhaps would not have occurred if Jordà had not come into their lives, which, through certain devices, provokes yet another reaction in the viewer – one of concern for the welfare of the residents, and thus, a reflection on the ethics of documentary filmmaking with non-actors who are also vulnerable adults. This is set up near the beginning of the film, when the residents are on the bus back from the zoo and a voice off-camera asks them how they feel about being on camera. Some enjoy it and are excited, some are indifferent, and others exhibit obvious discomfort. In this film, the protagonists are not actors, although we do see them acting in the final version of the play. The stark differences between the protagonists as themselves and the protagonists in character in the play is immediately obvious and acts as an applied example of Comolli's observation about the distinction between fiction and documentary being obvious in the body of the actor.

In the expository sections of *Mones com la Becky* we see medical historians discussing the history of mental illnesses whilst navigating a labyrinth in Barcelona and archive materials from Portugal about Moniz as well as interviews with his family, which lead up to the conclusion that although Moniz was rightly recognised for his achievements in brain mapping, his work relating to frontal lobotomy was poorly researched, hurriedly carried out and had grave consequences for the patients. Furthermore, whilst the viewer is provoked into reflection on society outside of the film, there is another level of reflexivity at work within the film. The title (Monkeys like Becky) and opening scenes of the residents watching the chimps at Barcelona Zoo set up the film's overarching theme; a

reflection on society's treatment of people with mental illness. Becky was the first chimp upon whom Moniz performed a frontal lobotomy, and that the film's central theme is the group of residents performing a play about Moniz makes for uncomfortable watching. To borrow Bill Nichols' description of a politically reflexive film, it 'reminds us how society works in accord with conventions and codes we may too readily take for granted' through the crude visual comparison of the residents and the chimps, as well as other visual signifiers which let the viewer know just exactly how close to home experimental procedures are to these peoples' lives. (Bill Nichols 2010, p.199).

The film's formal reflexivity also comes from the juxtaposition of performative and participatory modes with the expository, further reminding us that what we are seeing is also a constructed, personal viewpoint. The obvious and transparent metaphor of the labyrinth, and the shock of a comparison between person and chimp both draw our attention to the editing and *mise en scène*. The coupling of archive footage, interviews and 'live' filming, all draw attention to the editing process. Furthermore, the performative aspects of the film add to formal reflexivity and 'bring the emotional intensities of embodied experience to the fore' through such techniques as Jordà moving from behind the camera and speaking of his stroke experience to someone off camera, the residents' personal histories which affect their ability to enact or comprehend certain actions/emotions, or relating their personal experiences to Moniz (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 202). The reflexive and performative aspects of this film thus demonstrate 'how embodied knowledge provides entry into an understanding of the more general processes at work in society' for the view, and thus creates a different experience (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 203).

Jordà's free mixing of techniques and intricate weaving of modes means that his 'voice' as a director is a strong presence throughout the film and it is this that links *Mones com la Becky* to wider discussions and developments in documentary filmmaking in the 1990s about the voice of a documentary director, and the idea of auteur documentary filmmaking,

which is, as discussed, associated with Catalan documentaries since *Mones com la Becky*. Perhaps because of this formal experimentation and self-reflexivity the film is viewed as closer to art cinema than fiction and therefore is marketed as such and takes less at the box office. This may be so but as Wheeler and Canet remind us, the two ways of denigrating a national cinema are to suggest that it can never make money and that commercial viability is the sole criterion by which films ought to be judged (Wheeler, 2014, p. 15). Formal experimentation and innovation are traits often associated with art cinema, and thus, films that are not commercially successful. However, these films may be more valuable than they appear, especially when it comes to initiating aesthetic innovations that can then be developed by others, as explored in the next chapter.

Mones com la Becky represents a new stage in Jordà's career as a filmmaker, as it was the first film that he made after suffering a stroke that left him with agnosia (an inability to interpret sensations and/or recognise things), alexia (an inability to understand written language) and an inability to situate himself in space and time or distinguish shapes and colours. His biographer Laia Manresa writes that this was also the beginning of his career as a documentarian, rather than (primarily) a fiction director. This is not strictly true, given that he had sporadically made documentaries in the past, but it was the beginning of a period where he worked solely on documentary.

> Jordà realised it was very difficult for him to work on fictional screenplays. It was then when Jordi Balló […] asked him to take part in the shooting of the odd film. Jordà recovered the fictional project he had on the Nobel Prize winner Egas Moniz and turned into a documentary. It would be *Mones com la Becky* (1999) co-directed with Núria Villazán, script supervisor on his last fictional film, *Un cos al bosc / A body in the woods* (1996).
>
> (Manresa, 2006, p. 148)

After *Mones com la Becky*, Jordà went on to direct three more documentaries, as well as collaborating on a number of other projects, before his death in 2006 at the age of seventy. The documentaries he directed during this period were; *De nens* ('About Kids') (2004),

Veinte años no es nada ('Twenty Years is Nothing') (2005) and, *Mas allà del espejo* ('Beyond the Looking Glass') (2006) and they represent a period of intense creativity in Jordà's life, where he experimented above all with the participatory, performative and reflexive modes of documentary filmmaking discussed in relation to *Mones com la Becky*. That his style developed in this way partly out of necessity serves to highlight how the development of this aesthetic was not a planned activity, but rather, the result of various factors on a personal (illness), local (context for experimental filmmaking at the UPF) and more general (new documentary boom) level. This in turn highlights how the 'Catalan' of 'New Catalan documentary' is less of a concern to the filmmakers who experiement not to develop a Catalan aesthetic but to simply experiment; something that differentitates Catalan documentary from Catalan historical drama as explored in chapter five.

En construcción

En construcción premiered at *Donostiako Zinemaldia,* (San Sebastian Film Festival) in 2001 where it won the FIPRESCI prize from the International Federation of Film Critics. Like *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* and *Mones com la Becky*, it explores the space between reality and fiction, but with very different results. It is the only film of Guerín's to be set in his home city of Barcelona and it tells the story of an area of the city, *El Raval*, during the construction of the city's new identity before, during, and after the 1992 Olympics, from the viewpoint of local residents and the builders working on the project. Like the films of Comolli and Jordà made with the same cohort of students on the MDC, *En construcción* articulates a critical viewpoint, although through subtler, less shocking means. As such, it can be seen as the film from which the documentary strand of *cinema barceloní* develops. The film opens with archive footage of the area in the early 1900s, before this is replaced with contemporary footage of the area, focusing on some graffiti of

eyes that function as a visual metaphor for observation. A black screen with white text reads, 'Things seen and heard during the construction of a new building in El Chino, a popular neighbourhood that was born and died with the century'.

Six minutes into *En construcción*, a scene occurs which acknowledges both the influence of European cinema on Guerín and this film, as well as the influence of the European Union on the redevelopment of Barcelona. Teenagers play football on a vacant plot of land in the *Barrio Chino* area of Barcelona (later renamed the *Raval*) upon which a block of flats, and the film, will soon be constructed. Behind them, a billboard reveals plans for the area; a large tree-lined *Rambla* (now the Rambla del Raval) surrounded by new blocks of flats. The sign proclaims, 'This project is eighty-five per cent financed by the European Community Development Fund'. This can be understood as referring to the influence of Europe in the construction of the filmmaking project, which is financed by Arte, Canal Plus, the *Institut National de L'Audiovisuel* in Paris (who were also involved in *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista*) and received help with distribution from MEDIA Europe. However, with hindsight it more obviously makes a somewhat prophetic comment on what is known as the 'Barcelona Model' of urban regeneration explored in chapter four in relation to later films, (Rius Ulldemolins, 2014, p. 3026). Therefore, alongside contributing a distinctive aesthetic that will develop throughout the next 15 years, it also plants a seed for a major theme in creative documentaries and films of other genres; criticism of the Barcelona Model of urban regeneration and its effects on local residents.

In order to understand the distinct approach to the space between fact and fiction in *En construcción* though, it is necessary to first look at Guerín's previous film, *Tren de sombras* ('Train of Shadows') (Guerín, 1997). This is because formally, *Tren de sombras* is homage to the filmmakers that Guerín admires, as well as a reflection on the medium of film and the space between reality and fiction that documentary occupies.

Thematically and contextually, *Tren de sombras* ruminates on the collision of past and present, as well as memory and place and early and French filmmaking, thus further consolidating a the links between contemporary Catalan cinema, early cinema and French cinema as well as establishing the fascination with interstices in time and space that will manifest in a variety of ways in later films associated with this movement; *En construcción* (Guerín 2001)*, Cravan vs Cravan* (Lacuesta, 2002)*, Dies d'agost (Days of Summer)* (Marc Recha, 2006) *Mercado de futuros (Futures Market)* (Mercedez Álvarez 2011)*,* and *La plaga (The Plague)* (Neus Ballus 2013), to name a few.

Reminiscent of *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty, 1922), *Tren de sombras* begins with scrolling text explaining that the original footage, shot in Normandy by Gèrard Fleury shortly before his mysterious death in 1930, was badly stored and therefore the celluloid is severely damaged. The remit of the film, as explained in the text, is to recreate and re-enact scenes from the salvaged celluloid. As in much early cinema, Flaherty staged scenes without notifying the viewer that they were fabricated, so here it appears that Guerín notifies the viewer that this may be so. However, after creating an intriguing narrative of deceit and betrayal between the family members through rewinding, zooming in on, and replaying parts of this damaged 'found footage', it is later revealed that this is not, in fact, the original footage and therefore the scrolling text, like in *Nanook of the North* is only half true. This is what takes the film beyond homage to Flaherty and into reflection on ever-present questions of inherent subjectivity and authorial voice in documentary films. As we realise that the footage was not, in fact, original, we are made aware of the control the filmmaker has over our interpretation of events and whether or not we learn that they were not entirely true, differing significantly from early cinema where this self-reflexive aspect was less clear.

The homage to Flaherty is also clear in the introduction of the 'characters' via intertitles, which explains their relationship to each other, before twenty minutes of what the viewer

believes to be Fleury's salvaged footage of his family at a country house during the summer. As these characters are later revealed to be actors, the family is fabricated, as in *Nanook of the North.* It is also in this original footage that *Tren de sombras* incorporates homage to French New Wave Film. In one scene of supposedly original footage, the camera turns its attention upwards, away from the subject, to focus on branches swaying in the breeze thus reminding the viewer that someone is behind the camera, deciding what to film. Furthermore, twenty minutes in, a jump cut brings colour and sound to the screen as the local village is portrayed through a series of long, static takes. Sounds are magnified, as we hear the interior sound of each passing car with great detail. This will be repeated throughout the colour sections of the film that punctuate the old footage, again drawing attention to post-production processes. Contemporary shots of the empty family home, the ticking clock, and shadows on the walls will be recreated almost exactly fourteen years later in *Mercado de futuros.*

As well as early cinema, Guerín also especially admires Yasujirõ Ozu, Italian Neo Realism (especially Roberto Rossellini and Vittoria de Sica), the French New Wave (especially Jean-Luc Godard, Agnes Varda, and Eric Rohmer), and American Avant-Garde (especially Jonas Mekas). These are names that consistently appear in lists of influences of all MDC alumni and of the Spanish filmmakers to be included as references there are few but Buñuel, Víctor Erice, and Val de Omar are common. As is evident from this list of influences, Guerín's is a cinema that draws much inspiration from the avant-garde cinemas of Europe, as he acknowledges in *En construcción* through the aforementioned scene of youth playing in front of the billboard proclaiming European involvement in the regeneration project, and by extension, the film.

> The relationship between Catalan cinema and European Cinema is a longstanding one. The tradition, during the Franco dictatorship, of travelling to France to see films, or of passing [French] films clandestinely between cineclubs and various

> centres has always been important in Catalonia, and from then on the European influence, and above all the French influence, would be obvious.
>
> (Comella Dorda, 2010, chap. 149)

Jordi Balló is confident that the two aesthetic innovations in *En construcción* that would change documentary filmmaking were; the use of shot/counter shot with eye line matches (a technique from classical narrative editing), and the way in which sound is used to introduce visuals. Both of these techniques are associated with continuity editing, give the impression of a planned and scripted film, and also characterise later films that are seen as belonging to the Guerín school, along with the developing characters ou of non-actors.

Two of the protagonists in *En construcción* are a young couple who are introduced to the audience through the use of sound in a scene that is emblematic of the film itself. A shot of construction workers is accompanied by the sounds of a building site, before these sounds are replaced with interior sounds and the camera pans backwards to reveal that it was actually filming the building site through a window, which creates a natural frame as the conversation of this couple, Juani and Iván, becomes audible. Juani teases Ivan for being a *falange* ('Falangist'); a member of the far-right political party which was founded by Primo de Rivera and whose diluted values were associated with Francoism. We later discover that Juani works as a prostitute and Ivan does not work, as he is waiting to go to the military and it is revealed that they live in Juani's mother's flat, which is later demolished on camera to leave them apparently homeless. However, in another scene, a conversation between Abdel and Abdelsalem, two construction workers from Morocco, Abdel explains to Abdelsalem that the residents are given money to move; 'they give them 800.000 pesetas and then sell the new flats for 20 million pesetas'. After the demolition of Juani's mother's flat, Juani and Ivan are pictured sleeping in the corner of a half-demolished building, as middle-class prospective buyers are shown around the almost finished flats, acting as if the construction workers still there are invisible and commenting

on the eyesores that are the existing residents' flats; 'What I don't want to see are clothes hanging on balconies', 'I hope they'll all be new homes soon', 'what matters is who your neighbours are'.

Another group of protagonists of this film are the construction workers, the aforementioned Abdel and Abdelsalem, as well as Santiago, the boss Juan, and his son, also Juan. Juan explains to his son as they build a stairway, 'the first thing I did when I got to Barcelona, like all the young people, was buy a watch and come to the *barrio chino*. Everyone used to come here for a drink and now there are only a few granddads. The mayor wants to make it new again'. Abdel and Abdelsalem work with Santiago, a bricklayer, and discuss the plans of the new flats but Abdel warns Abdelsalem, they pay us to work, not to understand, if we understand we get fired.' Santiago is less political, but seems to enjoy Abdel's poetic, political and philosophical side, laughing when Abdel states that he sings The Internationale every morning, after Santiago has admitted that he is not religious. They share mealtimes over a hob they build from wood and nails, which a homeless person is later filmed using. Whether this shot is planned or accidental, is not clear, but demonstrates the desire to show the lives of the people affected by regeneration and functions as a transition from day to night in narrative time.

Children are given a lot of screen time, those that live in the area as well as the children of the prospective residents, who are fascinated by the construction workers and the local residents. In one scene at the end of the film a child being walked around the new flat waves across the alleyway at a resident in one of the older flats. He does not see her, but the mother insists that she keep waving until he does. The palpable lack of sound in this scene creates an atmosphere of tension as we wonder if the man is simply pretending they are not there, as many of the new residents plan to act towards him. However, he does wave, and the tension is diluted as the tour moves on.

Local children are also a source of comic relief in a scene near the beginning of a film that unknowingly pre-empts a major trend in Catalan and Spanish cinema of all genres throughout the 2000s. Fifteen minutes into the film, archaeologists come on site to investigate some findings, which turn out to be a burial site. At first they uncover a hand, then a skull, and then numerous skeletons that the residents speculate is Roman based on the nearby Church of *Sant Pau del Camp* ('Saint Paul in the Field'). Onlookers are fascinated, especially children. 'Have you ever seen a skeleton?' one girl asks her brother, to which he replies, 'On the telly'. 'But television is fantasy, don't you get it? Television is fantasy!' she mocks in an exchange that reminds us that this is a documentary. The visuals that accompany conversations such as these are introduced through sound, which makes them appear planned. However, this is not the case. The sound recordist Amanda Villavieja, who was a student on the MDC, was walking around with a boom and whenever she found an interesting conversation she would signal for the camera to zoom in or pan over to where she was. A child wonders what all the equipment is and her mother explains pointing at the camera situated across the burial site, 'that is the television', before signalling below where they are standing, 'and this is the radio', demonstrating the distance between them. Villavieja has gone on to work on forty-two documentaries since *En construcción*, including later films by Guerín and those of Isaki Lacuesta, Mercedes Álvarez, Ariadna Pujol, as well as Ricardo Íscar's documentary *Al fossat* (*El foso*, 'Orchestral Pit') (Íscar, 2012), in which sound is central.

Aside from the aesthetics of this scene though, the chance finding of a burial site during filming would turn out to link the film to contemporary climate of the recovery of historical memory. In 2000, the year before *En construcción* was released, the *Associación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Historica* (ARMH) was created after the exhumation of the mass grave of thirteen Republican soldiers shot in 1936 by Falangists in Priaranza del Bierzo in Castilla y León, which was widely televised. In *En construcción*, an older

woman remarks that, 'they can't be from the Civil War, can they? Look at them'. This scene, perhaps the most observational in the film, not only grants us a glimpse of a society beginning to deal with enormous historical trauma but it also excellently captures the long life span of a city currently undergoing yet another transformation. This provokes reflection upon human existence in some onlookers; 'look how we live on top of dead bodies and we don't even know', one woman comments after musing on how everyone ends up in the ground no matter who they were. The end of that day in narrative time is marked by shots of the empty half-demolished buildings and the bare skeletons under a full moon, edited to make a skull appear to be staring at the moon in a spooky transition from day to night, and giving us time to reflect upon the scene.

This editing of this transition to create a spooky effect demonstrates how importing devices from certain genres can be effective in documentary, a theme which is especially relevant in *Ciutat morta* (Ortega and Artigas, 2014) and other political documentaries made between 2012 and 2015. However, it is not the only device imported into *En construcción* from other modes of entertainment. The film opens by setting the scene visually through the archive footage of a sailor wandering through the area, the graffiti, and the intertitle. However, after this a protagonist who acts as something of compère speaks a monologue that functions as a prologue to the film, a technique imported from theatre. The eccentric retired sailor Antonio, walks across the shot before stopping to greet a friend. He walks up to the camera apparently greeting the crew. '¡*Buenos días*! Good morning!' he shouts, before wandering out of sight. We still hear him though, suggesting that he is equipped with a microphone, or Villavieja is following him. The camera catches up with him and he gesticulates, arms wide, as delivers a monologue that functions almost asa prologue.

> I've been all over the world, in London, every street has a square and arches, and here we haven't organised it well. We just have skinny streets and there isn't what there should be, a modern city. It is outdated, it has gone out of fashion and people have decided there is not enough space, there are no manners.

He goes on to outline how the street layout will change whilst his monologue is intercut with images of protest graffiti; 'Demolition no! Rehabilitation!'. The scene transitions to the construction workers emptying the flats due for demolition, with deliberate attention on personal items. This juxtaposition of the monologue in favour of the new street plan, and the evidence of residents' opposition informs us that this film will tell the stories of those whose stories often go untold, in this case, those affected by the urban regeneration of Barcelona.

As is evidenced by the use of sound, shot reverse shot, scenes of tension, an overarching narrative, developing romances, the character of the narrator, subtle visual poetry, homage, and prophetic dialogue, this film did not look like a documentary at a time when documentaries were still overwhelmingly in the form of reports, biographies, or essays, and screened on television (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 156). *En construcción* is primarily observational but the above components remind the viewer that 'the act of filming transforms reality into representation' (Canet, 2014, p. 108). This is partly a manifestation of Guerín's admiration for Robert Flaherty and early cinema.

> A filmmaker should know the world he is filming, so he/she will always establish a dialogue with it. It is impossible to keep distance, not in the sense of 'denuncia social', but rather through humanist sentiment, that which makes you worry for the others who inhabit the same space as you.
>
> (Guerín, cited in Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 156)

It is through this manner of working, which Guerín calls the 'Flaherty work unit', of spending years in the company of protagonists before filming, that a relationship is built with protagonists in order for the filmmaker to be able to tell their story in the 'we speak with them, for you' that Nichols associates with the participatory mode of documentary filmmaking (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 179). *En construcción* took three years to shoot, but during the first year nothing was filmed; they simply spent time in the area and got to

know the people. After that, filming started and in a mixing of participatory and observational modes, some aspects of it are simply filming the day to day life, whereas other are 'constructed' using what Guerín calls '*puesta en situación'* ('put in a situation') whereby a topic or object is given to the protagonists and they interact with it, producing a scene that is both real and unscripted as well as planned. An example that Guerín gives of *puesta en situación* in *En construcción* is when Juani and Ivan play video games at the arcade.

> It is a situation that is part of their daily lives. When they have a few *duros* [a term for five peseta coins, but now used to refer to petty cash] they spend it on joints and these machines. It is not an artificial situation, proposed from the outside, but rather it comes from knowing them […] They don't care about the camera. They are absorbed in the shooting action. […] The work of the filmmaker consists in choosing what to show and how to show it, to break down the shots and what is in those shots.
>
> (Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 161)

Furthermore, the overarching narrative and argument of the film is created in the editing process, rather than before filming. Unlike in *Mones com la Becky*, narrative time is chronological in *En construcción* and is marked by a series of transitions, that simultaneously allow the viewer to absorb the previous scene and prepare for a change in protagonist. These transitions show the clock face with the roman numerals slowly spinning on top of the Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria visible in the distance, as well as transitions from day to night and night to day. But these shots also add to the main theme of the film which is to criticise the property speculation that comes with urban regeneration. In one particular transition from day to night, we see through various windows that most people are either watching *Land of the Pharaohs* (Howard Hawks 1955) or a programme about construction. As the various screens show either slaves building pyramids or concrete pouring into moulds, we are pushed to consider the plight of the poor in the

construction of houses for the rich, in a documentary that makes us feel we are watching a fiction.

Conclusion

Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista, *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción* are three very different films but together they ushered in the New Catalan Cinema. However, as detailed analysis of these films has shown, although they may bear some similarity in exploring the space between fact and fiction, the way they do so is very different. *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* positions the body of the actor at the centre of the distinction between documentary and fiction but forces us to question whether or not this is true through having the protagonists transition between actors in a documentary, actors playing characters in a play in a documentary, and actors playing actors consumed by their roles in the play. *Mones com la Becky* also uses theatre to great effect, but this time the experience of fiction is more related to the viewer's experience. Mixing expository scenes with archives, observational scenes, interviews, re-enactments and Jordà's own participation, this critical observation on the history of lobotomy and society's treatment of people with mental health issues creates the 'sensation of watching a horror' as Quintana writes about its premier. The incorporation of shot/reverse shot, characters, and a prologue into *En construcción* also produces the sensation of watching self-reflexive fiction, but a kind of fiction closer to neorealism. *En construcción* creates a poetic and observational critical account of those affected by regeneration in Barcelona, and acknowledges the place of Europe and the European Union in both the construction of the film, and the regeneration. Thus, these three films may spark a 'docufiction' aesthetic that will characterise much documentary made in Barcelona from then on, but the aesthetic is far from homogeneous and will only become more heterogeneous as time goes on. It is apt to

remind ourselves here of Quintana's statement that the 'defining characteristic of Catalan cinema is its indefinability' (Quintana, 2014, p. 11).

Together, the three films discussed here foreshadow some dominant themes of the New Catalan Cinema that would proliferate in a variety of modes and genres. Torreiro write that these dominant themes are 'biographies', 'history', 'the city and transformations', and 'looking abroad' (Torreiro, 2010, pp. 48–59). However, it is worth adding that the broad thematic similarity between these three films is that they all relate to telling the stories of those silenced by history, lending a voice to the voiceless. In *Buenaventura Durrutti anarquista*, a group of actors research and enact the life of a Spanish historical figure who represented the resistance to Franco. In doing so, they contribute to the wider movement of rewriting the history of the early-mid twentieth century from the point of view of the losing side of the Civil War. In *Mones com la Becky* the performative and participatory aspects create a situation whereby 'embodied knowledge provides entry into an understanding of the more general processes at work in society' (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 203). In this case the knowledge embodied is that of illness, which functions as a metaphor for society. This is, as discussed, a major theme of many Catalan documentaries later in the decade and mental health issues become visible, and often related to the recovery of memory. The biographical aspect of *Mones com la Becky* will also reappear in much of Lacuesta's work, as well as others, as a way into wider discussions of history and society. In *En construcción* the major theme is undoubtedly the negative effects of the urban regeneration of Barcelona, which will become more overtly critical as time, and the regeneration of Barcelona as a global city, goes on and telling the story of those affected become more necessary.

To place these films within the overarching historical narrative of the New Catalan Cinema, this chapter has examined three documentaries that are recognised as central to the beginning of a new phase of documentary filmmaking in Barcelona in order to understand

how they came to be so central, as well as what legacy they left for filmmakers that would later train on the same course, or work with people trained on the same course. They were made at the crossroads between education and industry in Barcelona, which was at that time still considered a peripheral site of oppositional and experimental filmmaking, in large part because of its own film history and especially the legacy of the *Escola de Barcelona*. Facilitating the production of feature length films on postgraduate course with established directors, finance from European television channels, and local independent production companies proved to be a successful combination for aesthetic experimentation. However, although these films may be heralded as Catalan or *barceloní*, they are influenced by and made with the involvement of European cinema and television, and their audience was overwhelmingly foreign. Thus, the transnationalism inherent in the production, aesthetic and reception of the creative documentary in Barcelona highlights that the films understood to have ushered in the New Catalan Cinema were facilitated by the very processes that seem to invalidate the concept of national cinema. Perhaps more appropriate would be to understand them as barceloní, which although seemingly more specifically local, actually seems to better incorporate the idea of a meeting point between local and global.

Chapter Four

Creative Documentary: Towards a *Cinema Barceloní*

Introduction

Comas writes that, 'we have become accustomed to talking about '*cinema català'*, when really it would be more thorough to talk about '*cinema barceloní'* (Comas, 2010, p. 24).

> The films made by companies outside of Barcelona can be counted on two hands, and almost all of them have similar approaches to those made in the capital. […] Local themes outside of the capital are usually treated from a Barcelona perspective. However, we are not the only ones to do this: most of Spanish cinema (apart from the three autonomous communities who make their own) almost always gives a centralised vision on whatever topic it approaches […].
>
> (Comas, 2010, p. 24)

His argument for replacing the term *cinema català* with *cinema barceloní* is based on the fact that films set outside of the Catalan capital are always treated from a Barcelona perspective. However, there is another complication to the slippage between these terms, which is that distinctly *barceloní* films, in both content and context, are often labelled as *cinema català*. Martí Olivella writes about the 'solid documentary tradition in Catalonia' that has given way to cultural centrality for those 'working around the parameters of the documentary mode' (Martí Olivella, 2013, p. 53). Yet, in reference to what is usually called 'the Catalan documentary', Torreiro points out that films should more accurately be called '*cinema barcelonés',* because of the distinctly Barcelonan context and content (Torreiro, 2010, p. 45). Obviously, Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, so it makes sense that films made there are both Barcelonan *and* Catalan, just as they are both Catalan *and* Spanish. However, the interchanging of terms obscures the fact that 'Barcelona and its hinterland have traditionally been considered by some to be naturally antagonistic' as mentioned in chapter two in relation to the fragmented nature of the Catalan speaking territories, even within Catalonia (Calvo, 2010, p. 110).

As explored in the literature review, this thesis assumes that the most widely accepted description of a national cinema, even a stateless one, balances a consideration of contextual and textual features. Contextually, national films are said to be those which are made (at least partly) with creative and technical talent, as well as finance, from the nation in question. In textual definitions, they are said to deal with nationally specific issues, or be based on a literary or cinematic tradition seen as 'belonging' to the nation in question. Based on the comments made by Torreiro and Comas that most of Catalan cinema is made in Barcelona, and is therefore contextually *barceloní,* this chapter extends the above definitions of national cinema to the idea of 'city films' as those which are both made in and about the city in question. In this case, the city is, of course, Barcelona. Qualifying the term *cinema barceloní* in this way provides a challenge to the concept of 'Catalan cinema' that is not based on the fact that Catalan cinema is part of the larger Spanish cinema. Nor is it based on the fact that Catalan cinema is, like all cinemas, inherently transnational. Rather, it provides a challenge to the concept of Catalan cinema that is based on its 'fractured nature' (Epps, 2012, p. 71). In doing so, it demonstrates that, like Spanish cinema, Catalan cinema can be understood as characterised by 'internal fragmentation' as well as globalisation, (Berthier and Seguin, 2007, p. xii).

The films discussed here do not engage explicitly with ideas of Catalan identity or articulate any particular Catalan specificity. These films are multilingual, reflecting the linguistic landscape of Barcelona, and they critically engage with themes of urban regeneration and globalisation in Barcelona, that make them comparable to 'city films' more generally. *En construcción* first approached the topic of urban regeneration and its effects on a particular community in the Raval area of Barcelona, and since then numerous creative documentaries have dealt with this theme, exposing the flipside to globalisation and the branding of Barcelona. *Can Tunis* (González Morandi and Toledo, 2007) portrays the remaining community of the Can Tunis area at the foot of Montjuïc, a hotspot of drugs

and crime, as demolition for the expansion of the Port threatens them. Others take a more macro approach to the topic, such as *La lliuta aper l'espai urbà* (*La lucha por el espacio urbano,*'The fight for urban space') (Sucari, 2006). However, four films in particular lend themselves to discussion based on their development of the 'city and transformations' theme identified by Torreiro (Torreiro, 2010, p. 54). These films are *De nens* ('About kids') (Jordà, 2004), *Ciutat morta* (*Ciudad muerta, Dead City*) (Ortega and Artigas, 2014), *El taxista ful* (*The taxi thief*) (Sol, 2005), and *La plaga* (*The Plague*) (Ballús, 2013). As pointed out by Luís Moreno Caballud, the performative nature of Jordà's approach to filmmaking and the authorial nature of Guerín's approach characterise the two main trends of contemporary Spanish documentary (Moreno-Caballud, 2014, p. 62). So, one reason for discussing the films in this order is to examine how the theme of regeneration is explored using the aesthetic most associated with the 'Jordà school' and that which is most associated with the 'Guerín school'.

Before discussing the films however, it is necessary to provide a brief explanation of the common theme: the 'Barcelona model' of urban regeneration. It has been alluded to in discussions of *En construcción* but it is worth examining what this means in a more detail. Juan Belloso gives a concise explanation of how it all started.

> After forty years of continued repression by Franco's dictatorship, after which the lack of public investment as well as the degradation of the physical spaces of the city were evident, Barcelona started a new era full of ambition and hope and with the desire to move on from one of the greyest periods of its history. 1979, the year marked the beginning of the global redesign of Barcelona, with two main objectives: to improve the quality of life of its citizens, and to put the city on the map in terms of global awareness.
>
> (Belloso, 2011, pp. 119–120)

What followed was the initial period of regeneration that focused mainly on infrastructure, educational and sanitary provision. However, when the city was selected as the site for the 1992 Olympic games, Barcelona was 'under enormous pressure to meet the technological

and urban requirements of such a large-scale public event' (Sánchez, 2002, p. 17). The way Barcelona dealt with this is largely applauded and is generally regarded to have used the opportunity to turn the city around.

> Barcelona's response to the Olympic stimulus has been more intense and sustained than that of the other host cities. This has made Barcelona'92 a model in so far as impact is concerned. This is where Barcelona's performance was exceptional: in its extraordinary and sustained capacity to ride the Olympic wave.
>
> (Brunet, 2005, p. 9)

However, as much as the 'Barcelona Model' of urban regeneration and city branding may now be a reference in the fields of urban studies and place-branding, there are many who criticise it as a top down model. Sánchez writes that the popular support for regeneration by citizens, 'whilst validating the social and urban improvements that have taken place, suggests the success of official efforts to get the city's inhabitants to identify with the positive aestheticised images of the city offered to them' (Sánchez, 2002, p. 306). The city may have been turned into an 'aesthetically pleasing spectacle', but he points out that this is at the detriment of those 'who cannot legally, economically or socially afford to enter the city's official image' (Sánchez, 2002, p. 307).

The two sides of post-1992 Barcelona are reflected within *cinema barceloní* of all modes. International co-productions such as *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Woody Allen, 2007) present a romanticised, accessible view of the city in what has been dubbed, 'the tourist gaze' for an international audience (Urry, 1990). Local melodramas such as *Barcelona, nit d'estiu* (Barcelona, summer night) (Dani de la Orden, 2013) can be understood to 'promote the city as a narcissistic mirror, reflecting back at its citizens an aestheticised, sanitised image of itself', given that the audience for this kind of film is mostly domestic, i.e. Catalan, or living in Barcelona (Sánchez, 2002, p. 307). *Buenaventura Durruttti, anarquista*, *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción* all demonstrated that documentary is an effective tool for social criticism and for lending a voice to marginalised people or

communities. Thus, given that this chapter examines 'the city and transformations' as a major theme of the creative documentary format, the films discussed here take a largely critical approach to the topic. That is not to say that documentary is the only format through which a critical tone can be taken, as is demonstrated by *Biutiful* (Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu, 2010), which many saw as the first film to take a critical approach to the topic of Barcelona's regeneration.

> After so many years of international applause for Barcelona's monumental and spectacular built environment, at long last Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Biutiful* (2010) shows, as this essay explores, not a dystopic future Barcelona but the dark underbelly of the Barcelona that already exists.
>
> (Fraser, 2012, p. 20)

As a Catalan, Spanish, and Mexican co-production by an acclaimed director and with Javier Bardem in the lead role, it is understandable that this film may be seen by international audiences as the first film to question the veracity of the 'creative city' image that Barcelona projects externally and, as Sanchez argues, back onto itself. However, this chapter demonstrates that in the creative documentary mode, this has been a trend that has developed in films that deal with 'the city and transformations' at least since *En construcción* was made in 2001.

As previously mentioned, exploring this 'dark underbelly' of Barcelona is a theme developed upon in both schools of documentary filmmaking. All four films explored in this chapter deal with this topic and all can be seen to occupy a space between documentary and fiction, albeit in distinct ways. However, their incorporation of moods or devices from other genres of filmmaking means that they address the issue of a changing Barcelona from a number of different angles. The rapid modernisation of Barcelona likens the context of filmmaking to that of films made in the 1940s and 1950s and later tagged as 'noir', which Dimendberg writes were a 'cultural reaction to rapid and unprecedented changes in the built environment, whose aging centres were now displaced by an array of modern

constructions' (Dimendberg, 2004, p. 8). Stone writes that these films held a 'dark mirror' up to American society, which 'questioned the fundamental optimism of the American dream' (Stone, 2007, p. 186). Incorporating noir into the discussion of contemporary documentaries and ideas of a cinema barceloní may at first seem unusual. However, given that noir is not a stand alone genre but rather, as Winston Dixon Wheeler argues in his discussion of noir and paranoia, 'a pervasive world view [that] works in a wide variety of cinematic staples' then noir can be seen in any mode or genre of filmmaking that fulfils a function of questions the optimism of society (Dixon Wheeler, 2009, p. 2). Here it is argued that *De nens* and *Ciutat morta* share a number of characteristics with noir that allow them to question optimism of rapid and unprecendented changes to the built environment of Barcelona since the 1990s. There may be no particular look that unifies film noir (Spicer, 2007, p. 14). However, drawing on Schrader, Stone writes that 'realism was key to the tone and mood' (Stone, 2007, p. 191). Without delving too far into definitions of realism, it is not unreasonable to suggest that documentary, including that which self-consciously experiments with fiction, is a mode of filmmaking that conveys realism in both its tone and mood. Thus, the idea of noir-documentary as a medium through which to expose the darker side of apparently positive urban transformation becomes logical, especially in *De nens* and *Ciutat morta*.

The chapter first discusses *De nens* ('About kids') (Jordà, 2004) and *Ciutat morta* (*Ciudad muerta, Dead City*) (Ortega and Artigas, 2014) as two films that expose the darker side of urban transformation in Barcelona and use noir to do so. As such, they leave a radically different impression to that which is found in *En construcción* and creates a much more politically engaged, shocking, criticism. In the case of *Ciutat morta* this also translates into commercial and critical success and its direct condemnation of the Barcelona authorities, fourteen years after Guerín's initial, subtler, social criticism, reveals an intense anger toward the systems of government in Spain that are felt by many to be failing the

population and therefore taps into wider public sentiment. The second half of this chapter explores two films that examine the effects of rapid transformation in Barcelona, but with their focus specifically on globalisation and the effects of global capitalism rather than the built environment, despite how interlinked these two issues may be. *El taxista ful* (*The taxi thief*) (Sol, 2005) is discussed as a film that manages to sit more firmly in the middle of the Jordà and Guerín schools of aesthetics, and that develops the docufiction aesthetic even further, whilst providing an alternative criticism of the city and its inhabitants in relation to regeneration and late capitalism. *La plaga* (*The Plague*) (Ballús, 2013) is then discussed as a film that represents a less critical and more humanist portrayal of change in Barcelona, and one that moves the focus out from the central areas of the city to the peripheral edges where urban meets rural, and global meets local. Its aesthetic, much closer to the authorial style of the Guerín school, is discussed as representing a landmark achievement for the blurring of documentary and fiction in the creative documentary strand of the New Catalan Cinema, or indeed *cinema barceloní*.

De nens

De nens was the second film Jordà made with students of the MDC and resembles an art piece in that it is three hours long, and is much more performative than *Mones com la Becky*. However, it does still feature interviews, and plays with reflexivity on socio-political taboos as well as film form. This time the social issue is paedophilia, and the way in which it sits somewhere between mental illness and crime. It should be pointed out here that in the Castilian and Catalan languages there is a difference between *pedofilia* (having sexual feelings towards minors but not acting on them) and *pederastia* (acting upon these feelings and therefore committing the crime of sexual abuse against children). In English these two words also exist; paedophilia and pederasty. However, in English ‘paedophilia’ is used to refer to both the condition and the crime, especially in the media, whereas

pederasty refers to only male same-sex relations between and adult and a minor. Although the Castilian and Catalan lexicon may differentiate, there is obviously still crossover between illness and crime; *pederastia* necessarily involves *pedofilia*, but, in Castilian and Catalan, *pedofilia* does not necessarily involve *pederastia*. *De nens* explores this area of crossover by following a court case against Xavier Tamarit and Jaume Lli, charged with corrupting minors, and a couple charged with obtaining financial benefit from prostituting their children to these men. The crimes were committed in the Raval area of Barcelona, where *En Construcción* was filmed a few years earlier, and the film is a composite of observations of; this court case, the media coverage of this court case, and the neighbourhood itself. Just as *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* is punctuated with performances of old songs of resistance, *De nens* is punctuated with a performances and music written and performed by Albert Pla. However, unlike in *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista,* Pla's songs directly relate to the narrative. These interludes function as transitions between scenes, as do Guerín's intermittent shots of the city. However, in *De nens*, they inform the viewer, rather than allowing pause for reflection.

Jordá's use of observational techniques in this documentary expose the lazy and biased way in which reports on court cases like these are put together. The media have already judged the accused of being guilty, without ever carrying out an investigation themselves. They show up in the morning, stay for an hour or so of the trial, and repeat statements issued by the police. Jordà expands in an interview.

> They misinform, rather than inform, on what happens during the afternoon. What strikes me as worse is that they do not even report properly on the morning. […] They do not investigate, it is the police who investigate, give a report, and the press accept it without ever questioning it. During Francoism everyone knew that the police were lying […] Now do they suppose that the police do not lie, that they tell the truth? The police carry on lying. What has changed is that it no longer occurs to the press that this might be the case.
>
> (Seifert and Castillo, 2004 [cited in] Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 192)

The action is thus shown to be in the reporting of this case, rather than in the courtroom, where the camera lingers just long enough on the members of the court to show a yawning, disinterested judge, or two members of the jury chatting about something else. Meanwhile the accused, whose lives will change forever if judged guilty, try to defend themselves against a group of people who have already judged them guilty, as has the press. They must go through the motions anyway, in a rigged game of cat and mouse. The film is not sympathetic towards the accused, but by choosing to channel criticism at the judicial system and the media rather than at those accused of the most heinous of crimes, the viewer is presented with the uncomfortable situation of considering that perhaps our own views on the differences between *pedofilia* and *pederastia* are also biased, shaped by biased reporting, and reflected in a biased judicial system. This controversial subject matter that places paedophilia at the centre of a narrative without condemning it, and instead condemns the way in which it is reported upon, is perhaps one of the reasons, along with its extensive runtime, why the film had trouble gaining distribution. However, Jordà did not intend to defend paedophilia, but rather put the court case in context, and the context of this court case is the regeneration of the Raval area of Barcelona. The film's self-reflexivity and political subject matter, like in *Mones com la Becky*, 'reminds us how society works in accord with conventions and codes we may too readily take for granted' (Bill Nichols, 2010, p. 199).

> If this crime occurs in a neighbourhood, it is obvious that the neighbourhood is rotten, and if the neighbourhood is rotten, the rot must be cut out. It must be amputated, and the neighbourhood put in the hands of a surgeon. The surgeon is the urban architect that cleans the neighbourhood. This means starting with demolition, and then demolishing ten buildings, and constructing only one. This is called sanitising, hygienisation, sponging, but in reality it is a business and here it is very easy to pay by the square metre to demolish. These organisations that they set up pay very little for a building and then they sell it at a much higher price. In order to justify this, what could be a better excuse than explaining that this neighbourhood is rife with the only crime without forgiveness?
>
> (Seifert and Castillo, 2004)

Thus, *De nens* picks up the anti-gentrification narrative that was started in *En construcción*. However, *En construcción* lends a voice to the voiceless through a character-led narrative that provokes empathy in a documentary resembling a melodrama. *De nens* is not easy to watch. The uncomfortable way in which condemnation is aimed not at the paedophiles, but at those who condemn paedophilia for their own gain is difficult to comprehend at first. However, as the film goes on and it becomes clear that actually, paedophilia is not at the centre of this film, *De nens* creates a powerful reflection not just on the difference between *pedofilia* and *pederastia* (with their meanings in Castilian and Catalan), but also on the societal processes at work behind the regeneration of Barcelona. *En construcción* is gentle, but effective in its criticism of how this is happening in the Raval area of Barcelona. *De nens* is a brutal viewing experience, and just as Quintana wrote about *Mones com la Becky*, 'the film was not a horror but it was able to create a feeling of anguish in the spectator' (Comella Dorda, 2013, p. 7). Four years after Guerín's observations on the regeneration of the Raval, there is a detectable anger and contempt in Jordà's film.

Ciutat morta

> One of the most interesting recent examples of resistance to official urban policy is that constituted by the squatters' movement, the *Okupas.* While their existence is directly linked to the growing housing shortage in Spain's major cities, coupled with rising rents and house prices, and unemployment among young people their struggle to create an alternative personal yet collective cultural space at the heart of the city also represents an ideological position.
>
> (Sánchez, 2002, p. 307)

Ciutat morta (*Ciudad muerta, Dead City*) (Ortega and Artigas, 2014) opens with footage of a disused cinema taken over by *Okupas* (squatters) and renamed after Patricia Heras, who committed suicide in 2011 whilst on parole after four years in prison for a crime that she did not commit. Her supposed crime was throwing a plant pot from the second floor of an occupied theatre, which knocked a member of the *Guardia Urbana* (the Barcelona

branch of the *Mossos d'Esquadre* – the Catalan police force) into a permanent vegetative state in 2006. However, as the film reveals, she was in another part of the city at the time, and was only arrested because she happened to be in the same hospital as some of the other falsely arrested youths. They had been taken there after being arrested at the scene, and then severely beaten by the *Guardia Urbana* at the station. At the newly named 'Patricia Heras' cinema, they are screening a film called *Desmuntage 4F*, which was an earlier version of *Ciutat morta*. The footage appears to be shot from a video camera inside the cinema when the projection begins, showing an intertitle. A jump cut to the true beginning of *Ciutat morta* shows the same intertitle, full screen. It is a quote from Montesquieu written in French, with the Castilian translation underneath.

> There is no crueller tyranny than that which is perpetuated under the shield of law, and in the name of justice.

The quote sets up the tone of criticism and denouncement that accompanies the rest of the film. It also highlights the ideological position of the filmmakers; that they view urban regeneration in Barcelona as operating under the shield of the law, and in the name of justice. This in turn establishes the mood of the film and as with *De nens*, *Ciutat morta* can be understood to hold Stone's a 'dark mirror' up to the optimism of the Barcelona model of urban regeneration. *Ciutat morta* is worth exploring in detail not just for its approach to this theme, but also for its aesthetic and perhaps more importantly, its mood. As a documentary of harrowing events, *Ciutat morta* does not need a realist aesthetic to create the tone and mood of a noir, but, developing on the tendency for creative documentaries to incorporate elements from fiction, it can be seen to borrow not only from fiction, but specifically from noir.

Going beyond the questioning tone of *En construcción* and the criticism of *De nens*, *Ciutat morta* converts documentary into a tool for investigating the corruption behind an open

case on the false imprisonment and maltreatment of a number of youths arrested in 2006. The film ultimately suggests that, in cahoots with the Guardia Urbana, Barcelona City Council is leaving municipal buildings empty, knowing that they will be occupied. This, as *Ciutat morta* implies, will push prices down and ultimately persuade local residents to move elsewhere, leaving the area so dilapidated that it can be cheaply allotted for redevelopment. However, like in *En construcción* and *De nens*, criticism of the urban regeneration of Barcelona is secondary to the story of a particular person or group of people affected. In this case, the person at the centre of the film is Patricia Heras: *Ciutat morta* is thus primarily an expository activist film linked to the group of family, friends and supporters seeking justice for Patricia and the others who were tortured and imprisoned following the incident in 2006.

After the quote from Montesquieu, the film cuts to interviews with two of the youths arrested on the street immediately after the act in 2006. Rodrigo (Lanza) and Juan (Pintos) explain their arrest and beating in horrific detail. These scenes are intercut with mobile phone footage from the night of the incident at the theatre, and long, still, shots of the areas relating to their story; the police station on la Rambla, the Hospital del Mar, and the prison. These shots function as the transition shots of the Raval area do in *En construcción*; to allow us much needed time to process the shocking accounts being retold by Juan and Rodrigo. The sound accompanying these shots is ambient noise layered with a deep whirring sound that accompanies much of the film, and creates a sense of foreboding. As their stories move from location to location, a dark map of Barcelona with a spotlight highlighting their path around the city is accompanied by the sounds of sirens.

Rodrigo's descriptions of the police beating are horrifying to listen to, but the filmmakers also use visual and sound to push the viewer into really contemplating the horrors he experienced. At one point, he says, "It may have been a minute, but to me it seemed eternal, that minute was horrible". Following this, his words appear in white type on a black

background, before the image of a clock face with a second-hand ticking round is layered over a black and white static shot of people walking on the Rambla, outside the station where he was being beaten, as a member of the *Guardia Urbana* stands in the doorway. As the minute passes by, Rodrigo's words hang in the silence, and the lack of action on screen encourages contemplation of how much damage could have been done to him in only a minute. This transition shot does not grant breathing space, but rather, it acts to intensify Rodrigo's accounts of physical beating at the hands of the authorities. Simultaneously, it draws attention to the film's own construction and the perspective of that for which it was constructed; a search for justice.

The accounts of Juan and Rodrigo may be brutal to listen to, but the anguish increases as they go on to reveal the apathy of the doctors who treated their wounds, and their bewilderment at finding two others in the police van afterwards; Patricia and her friend Alfredo. This is where Patricia's story begins, told by her friend Silvia (Villullas) as she reads from Patricia's diary. After we see Silvia going into the recording booth to do this, her readings become narration, and accompany later, calmer, transition shots of the city. We hear a reading that describes the day of the incident, beginning with an explanation of why she had cut her hair like Cindy Lauper; with a chessboard design on one side. She describes getting ready to go out and discover 'this magical city', a description that jars with the portrayal of Barcelona in *Ciutat morta* and belongs more to a film that encourages an uncritical 'tourist gaze' such as *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (Woody Allen, 2007). Getting to know Patricia intimately through these readings works to make the sense of injustice even more acutely felt as the investigation unfolds. Through use of character, the political is personalised.

Archive footage of the music video for *Time after Time* (Lauper, 1983), in which Lauper wears the chessboard hairstyle, is layered with the ever-present deep whirring sound. Patricia's playful self-image is thus juxtaposed with the sinister events that will lead to her

meeting the badly-beaten Rodrigo in the police van. Interviews with others close to her reveal some of Patricia's back story; a sensitive poet who did not fit in, who moved to Barcelona from Madrid in December 2005, five months before being arrested. We hear her friends explaining the day of the incident, and that she was in hospital after a cycling accident, having gone there in an ambulance. The police, assuming her alternative Cindy Lauper look meant she was an *Okupa* (squatter), detained her. They demanded to see her phone, misunderstood a text message, assumed that it was inciting violence, and arrested her. Her story has now been narrated up until the point where she meets Rodrigo in the van, and the narration switches back to him and Juan. We hear more of their stories, intercut with readings of her poetry, shots of the city and photos of Patricia, accompanied with surreal sound effects, as well as being introduced to others who condemn the events through a series of 'talking heads'.

Gregorio Morán, a journalist who writes for *La Vanguardia*, speaks about the reasons for which sensitive and disaffected youths like Patricia gravitate towards the fashion and lifestyle that is mistaken as delinquency. Rodrigo's mother describes her experiences trying to find her son the night that he was arrested. Virginia Álvarez from Amnesty International describes how the organization had been receiving numerous complaints about physical maltreatment by the *Guardia Urbana* since their deployment (in their current form) in the year 2000, and the lack of adequate measures for internal investigation. CCTV footage of violence in *Guardia Urbana* interrogation rooms punctuates her interview, emphasising that Rodrigo is not the only one to have been treated in this way. Dr J.L Rodriguéz Mayorga, from the Institute of Medical Law and Forensic Science at the University of Barcelona explains that it would have been impossible for such injuries to have been caused by a flower pot thrown from street level, where Rodrigo and Juan were arrested. The use of these numerous 'talking heads' functions to contextualise the story in

light of wider events, whilst also functioning to lend credibility to the investigation of the filmmakers.

Rodrigo and Juan continue their narratives and arrive in front of the judge, expecting her to hear them out. They explain that on seeing her indifference, they realised that they had been condemned from the moment they were arrested, and that everything on their way to prison was simply a formality. Charged with possession of weapons and attempted murder, they faced twenty to twenty-five years. Gonzalo Boyé, Rodrigo's lawyer, explains how the way in which the police and the courts were dealing with the case 'lost all pretences of impartiality', and the outcome of their trial was preconceived. This is where the narrative of corruption begins to unfold, and the noir-like tone of this documentary begins to make sense. Recordings of the then Mayor of Barcelona, Joan Clos, on radio at the time of the incident and then interviewed by TV3's Mònica Terribas the night before the trial, reveal that his statement on where the plant pot came from had changed. At the time of the incident, he stated that it fell from above, but the night before the trial, he stated that it could have come from anywhere. However, his sources are kept from the defence by the court. Boyé and Jaume Asens, the defence representative from the Association of Lawyers of Barcelona, begin to speculate on the reasons why his statement changed: If no-one was found guilty, responsibility would automatically pass to the owners of the building who were, in this case, Barcelona City Council. Then it is revealed that all evidence had been cleared away by the *BCNeta!,* the street cleaning team. However, further 'talking heads' scenes reveal that *BCNeta!* are under orders never to clean the scene of a crime unless ordered by the councillor for security and mobility, who refused to participate in the documentary.

The narrative that began with Patricia's death and the contemporary movement seeking justice for her now skips back and forward through time to reveal the extent of the network of corruption; an all-powerful mayor, and an inherently corrupt city council, judicial

system, and police force. The doomed characters inhabit a decaying urban society and as they navigate an urban labyrinth as shown by the frequent appearances of the spotlighted map, their prospects get dimmer. Furthermore, although the film is an investigative documentary, it is arranged into chapters, in reference to literature. The early chapters are devoted to enabling us to identify with the characters, although the aesthetic of the film prevents us from mistaking it for fiction. Then, the argument unfolds as the filmmakers reveal pieces of information through interviews and leads to the conclusion that none of those arrested could have committed the crime, that the prejudiced and cruel *Guardia Urbana*, and especially the chief information officer, wield too much power, and that the Mayor is corrupt. As Spicer writes, there is a 'lack of agreement as to what are the common features that mark out film noir'(Spicer, 2007, p. 2). However, *Ciutat morta* definitely bears some of the features of films associated with that genre, if it can be called as such.

The circumstances of Patricia's suicide are not attributed directly to her false imprisonment, but it is implicit, and thus, her death is 'solved', but no justice is served. The ever-present documentary aesthetic in *Ciutat morta*, as well as the contemporary subject matter deny any safe distance from the 'plot'. The truths revealed are shocking and devices such as the minute-long silence that reflects Rodrigo's minute-long beating force contemplation of the real nature of the stories being retold. As if confirming that although this film may appear like a fiction, it is actually reality, towards the end one interviewee compares the situation to 'one of those North American films':

> "Unfortunately life is not Hollywood and we don't have a journalist, judge or policeman figure to resolve the plot […] In our story, the journalist writes an article blaming them, the police beat them, the judge will think it is fucking great to apply the maximum penalty, and society will applaud and say, 'look what happens for dressing that way.'"

The incorporation of devices from a specific genre may recall Guerín's use of shot/reverse shot, but the effect this film has is much closer to the anguish, horror and distress that *Mones com la Becky* and *De nens* create in the viewer through the use of reflexive mode. Again recalling Quintana's reaction to *Mones com la Becky*, one reviewer notes about *Ciutat morta*, it is "a marvellous documentary that puts your hair on end and proves that reality is better than fiction" (Ruíz, 2014). That the filmmakers should borrow from noir to create their social criticism is key to the film's ability to tap into contemporary social anxieties. Jennifer Fey and Justus Nieland argue that, 'film noir is best appreciated as an always international phenomenon concerned with the local effects of globalisation and the threats to national urban culture it seems to herald' (Fay and Nieland, 2010, p. ix). Writing about Spanish neo-noir, Ann Davies writes that the earliest examples of this genre 'tapped into anxieties about the political transition […] the forces of law and order […and] disenchantment with public institutions' before this 'gradually became of less interest to filmmakers than the anxieties of the private sphere' (Davies, 2007, pp. 211–213). In *Ciutat morta,* the public and the private collide, the death of the protagonist is real, and the therefore taps into the general anxieties and disenchantment surrounding Barcelona's rapid regeneration and urban change.

Ciutat morta is one of the most widely seen and critically successful films in this thesis, and this in turn functions well as a tool to give momentum to the ongoing movement of justice for Patricia. However, aside from the social purpose for which the film was made, it also demonstrates the presence of an audience for creative documentaries dealing with this theme. *Ciutat Morta* has the unusually high user-rating of 9.1 on filmin.es, a Spanish video on demand platform aimed at cinephiles. Furthermore, the Filmin press rating for *Ciutat morta* is also very high, at nine out of ten. *Ciutat morta* therefore has a higher rating than all of the films discussed in this thesis. The closest documentaries are *En construcción* (press: 7.5, user: 8.1), *El taxista ful* (press: 8.1, user: 7.9), *Cravan vs Cravan* (press: 8.7,

user: 7.9), *La plaga* (press: 8.5, user: 8.1), and *La casita blanca…* (press: 7.5, user: 7.4). The only other Catalan documentary that comes close in press rating is *Mones com la Becky*, which nevertheless does not match up in terms of user rating (press: 9, user: 7.6). Furthermore, some of the only other documentaries to receive similar press and user ratings are recent world-famous, multi-award winning documentaries such as *Five Broken Cameras* (Emad Burnat & Guy Dividi, 2011) and *Searching for Sugarman* (Mallick Bendjelloul, 2012) both with press ratings of 9 and user ratings of 8.9.

Through developing the approach to the space between fact and fiction in creative documentary filmmaking, *Ciutat morta* achieves its aims of bringing attention to the demand for justice. This was helped considerably by an incident surrounding its transmission on *Canal 33*, the cinema channel run by *Televisió de Catalunya*, the Catalan public broadcaster. Prior to its scheduled broadcast on 17th January 2015, the channel received a court order dictating that they must cut the five-minute section in which the ex-chief information officer of the *Guardia Urbana* is implicated in falsifying reports, and is advised to resign by a judge investigating him for another case. The censored section, which is available on multiple websites, shows the ex-chief of information officer later receiving a promotion from the Mayor. The furore surrounding the censorship of *Ciutat morta* came just before the yearly vigil and protests for the case to be reopened occur on 4th February (*Catalunyaplural*, 2015). Ironically, censorship thus worked in the film's favour. Spanish national newspaper *El País* ran an article entitled, '*Ciutat morta*; the night on which Spain learned who Patricia Heras was, thanks to censorship' (Marcos, 2015). Another Spanish national newspaper, *El Mundo,* ran an article two days after the broadcast of *Ciutat morta* summarising the film's impact; Barcelona City Council had been forced, by public pressure, to reopen the case (Oms, 2015). The case was eventually closed again after no new evidence came forward, but the filmmakers continue to use the film to put pressure on the authorities. On being awarded City of Barcelona Award in February of

2015 by Barcelona City Council, they attended, but refused to accept the award. They took the prize money, saying that they would put it towards 'investigating other cases of police abuse hidden by this council' (EFE, 2015). *Ciutat morta*'s scathing critique of corruption comes at a time when years of recession, long-term high unemployment rates and numerous cases of political corruption in all parties, but especially the party in government, characterise Spanish and Catalan social and political life. The same content represented in a traditional report-like documentary may not have had such impact, but the use of devices from a specific genre of fiction along with the poetic, reflexive and investigative documentary modes amount to an expository documentary that seems to have struck a chord with audiences.

Furthermore, other Spanish films have since used similar techniques. *Frankenstein 04155* (Rey, 2015) about the high speed rail crash in Galicia, is a film which has been called 'the *Ciutat morta* of 2015' (Suances, 2015) and uses a similar aesthetic. It was crowdfunded, which suggests that people now see documentary filmmaking as a tool for investigation into cases of injustice and corruption. It follows the format of beginning with a fatality (or in this case many fatalities) and investigates the reasons for which this happened, uncovering corruption and negligence within the Spanish government and the Public rail company. *En tierra extraña* (*In a Foreign Land*) (Icíar Bollaín, 2014) criticises the impact of the way the economic crisis has been handled on everyday people by lending a voice to the hundreds of thousands of graduates who have left Spain to work mostly as waiters in various places, focusing specifically on the 20,000 living in Edinburgh. It follows a woman setting up an art exhibition called, *Ni perdidos ni callados* ('neither lost nor silenced'), in reference to the numerous references to this generation as Spain's lost generation in the 'brain drain' that has occurred since the economic crisis. *Mi Querida España* ('My beloved Spain') (Moncada, 2015) suggests that perhaps post-transition Spanish democracy has never been what it seems, and develops the borrowing of devices from narrative fiction

further. The emblematic white rabbit leads the viewer down the rabbit hole into the strange world of Spanish society and politics since the Transition through the interviews of Jesús Quintero. It also incorporates music in a manner that resembles *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* and *De nens*.

Lastly, Pere Portabella, a filmmaker originally associated with the Barcelona School, has made a return to filmmaking with *Informe general 2: el nuevo rapto de Europa* ('General report 2: The New Abduction of Europe') (Portabella, 2015). It invokes fiction by its very nature it is a 'sequel' to his *Informe general sobre algunas cuestiones de interés para una proyección pública* (*General Report on Certain Matters of Interest for a Public Screening*) (Portabella, 1978). Drawing parallels between the political turbulence that Spain is currently experiencing, and that which it experienced during the Transition to Democracy; it deals with political corruption, the Catalan independence issue, and the economic crisis. Through self-reflexivity and its use of the performative mode it establishes citizens as protagonists who can use cinema to overcome the authorities-as-antagonists and thus resolve the ongoing plot of political corruption and exploitation of 'the people'.

As a film that fully engages in a criticism of the city in which it was made, in this case Barcelona, *Ciutat morta* provides an example of what can be understood as *cinema berceloní.* That it has a distinctly noir mood works to frame the events within a familiar aesthetic which also works to emphasise the findings of their investigation. However, the incorporation of noir-like aspects can also be read as a meta-cinematic problematisation of 'national' (or in this case 'regional' or 'city') cinema, because of its history of 'transcultural exchange and the reciprocal discursive appropriation and reappropriation [that] unsettles the traditional conception of national cinemas as fixed, self-contained entities, showing instead complex, interwoven histories of influences and interferences' (Spicer, 2007, p. 17).

El taxista ful

El taxista ful, (*The Taxi Thief*) directed by Jordi Soler under his pseudonym 'Jo Sol' (which translates as 'me alone'/'just me'/'Only I'), like the films already discussed, is a film that makes a political statement, and thematically is tied to Barcelona. However, it is perhaps more of a hybrid of fiction and documentary than has yet been discussed. The film masquerades as a performative, investigative and observational account of the life of a taxi driver who is on the run from the authorities for getting caught borrowing taxis to work nights. It has a narrative arc which sees our protagonist progression from a marginal position in a system that he wants desperately to be a part of, but which rejects him, to an accidental member of the 'occupy movement' which he once criticised. However, the story is actually the dramatisation of an urban myth and the protagonist, José, is played by Pepe Rovira, a non-actor, but not an actual taxi driver. The *Okupas* don't know this, and the urban legend of the taxi thief is Soler's way in to the occupy movement. It is never made explicit to the viewer that José is a character played by a non-actor, and so at face value it appears to be a creative documentary that focuses on people and communities who are marginalised, and even criminalised, by the modernisation of Barcelona, as in *En construcción*, *De nens*, and *Ciutat morta*. Upon learning that José is a social actor playing a mythical character, it is never clear how much of José/Pepe is spoken from a position of truth, and how much is role play. Thus, it recalls the similar position of the actors playing actors in and out of character that is first explored in *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista.* The official English-language title of this film may be *The Taxi Thief,* but the original title actually translates as 'The Fake Taxi Driver', which hints at the fact that José might not actually be the mythical taxi driver. However, it could also refer to the fact that he was stealing taxis, so is not immediately obvious.

The film begins with José recalling his arrival in Barcelona at the age of 12 when he shared a seventy-meter squared flat with twenty other people, started work at fourteen and 'felt like a hero', before adding 'but now I'm done for'.

> "This is the story of many people from Extremadura, Galicia, Andalusia… who in the golden years of the 60s and 70s came to Barcelona, or other cities. This is not a personal anecdote but a collective history… about how you live… you almost always leave full of hope and aspiration, but it is always a lie. All I wanted was a normal life."

It is in his search for a normal life that he commits theft and as a lawyer explains that his best defense is that of political delinquency, José becomes exasperated as he does not see himself as going against the system, but rather as someone who desperately wants to be part of it. The cameraman explains to him that this is his best option, establishing himself as a character in this story too. So begins a dialogue between the cameraman, José, and a group of *Okupas* who do see themselves as political delinquents, and actively seek a life outside of the system. José will eventually end up living with them, and as they sit around the table discussing the situation, they describe his actions as a 'provocative Dadaist act'. José disagrees and replies that 'but what people want is to live peacefully and work and earn money.' His attitude towards the *Okupas* is initially quite scornful: 'I don't know if I can explain. You guys dream of a life full of adventure and intense but life is not like this. What we have are hopes and dreams that are never realised […] people don't want to be happy, they want to suffer as little as possible'.

This recalls Sánchez's observation that *Okupas* represent an ideological position. 'The improvised tactic of the *Okupas* can be seen as individual actions defying the grand strategies imposed by the city's institutional regulators'(Sánchez, 2002, p. 308). It is also reflected in a scene when the cameraman asks José his opinion of Miguel Ángel, the man he will eventually squat with. He replies, 'A builder who speaks with finesse…. Nowadays they speak of philosophy while they lay bricks', in homage to *En construcción* as well as confirming Miguel Ángel as an Okupa committed to the ideological side of squatting.

Later, we see José cooking, and it is obvious that he is now living with them. Towards the end of the film, he has changed his views a little.

> 'I don't see it as bad that they occupy empty flats. It's a crime what they (the council) do with accommodation. 'I don't really have any choice (but to live like that) but what I was doing with the taxis was another thing entirely.'

In further homage to Guerín, shots of a changing Barcelona punctuate José's story. Views of the rapidly changing city, footage of protests and political meetings make up a montage that links José's story to a wider movement that he does not see himself as part of. At the end of the film his new friends ask him to speak at a political rally but he is unwilling. Unbeknown to the fact that this is not a social actor playing himself, but rather a social actor playing a mythical character in a documentary, this provokes reflection on how far the presence of the camera influenced his actions thus far.

These are all questions that are associated with his well-being, and the reflection on the effects of the presence of a film crew can be extended to the other documentaries made using the Flaherty work unit approach of getting involved in the lives of the protagonists. This in turn introduces another level of reflexivity: that of the nature of belief and the trust between spectator and documentary film. Masquerading as a performative documentary, subjective representations of underrepresented individuals mean that the film addresses the audience in a 'we speak about ourselves to you' form of address, rather than 'I speak about/with them for you' that Nichols has identified as the form of address more common to Expository, Observational and participatory modes (Bill Nichols, 2010). These three modes rejected the distancing of expository and observational modes, and thus sought to bring a direct, personal and complex relationship between the filmmaker and the subject onto screen, thus creating a more embodied form of truth. However, Jo Sol completely inverts this by mimicking these modes, using a fake social actor, and inventing an unjust

justice system that would act as his antagonist, pushing him to take actions that drive the plot, and lead to the juxtaposition of José and the *Okupas* and therefore, his main criticism.

The story of this taxi driver is woven into a biting criticism of gentrification in Barcelona; framing the local authorities and judicial system as the antagonist which puts pressure on him and therefore requires him to take actions which create his journey from a desire for social conformity, to occupying a position of non-conformance and opposition. However, the reasons for which José has been marginalised by the social system that he so desires to be a part of is not the only criticism in this film. Through the juxtaposition of José and the *Okupas* who squat because they choose a life outside of the system for philosophical reasons, we see the vast difference between those who frame José's actions of desperation as a 'provocative Dadaist act', and José himself, who just wants a normal life. The use of editing and music also pokes fun at the arty and philosophical *Okupas* drawing attention to the fact that for them, squatting is not an act of desperation.

The film is intercut with scenes of Marc, the *Okupa* who reaches out to José, philosophising the human condition. In theory Marc is a social actor playing himself, but it is never clear whether or not he is 'in on the joke', or if the joke is on him. He takes José to a group of anarchists organising campaigns against the precocity of employment and the enslavement of man to money, and they appropriate his story. This is something that José initially takes opposition to, as it seems paradoxical for him, a man who wants to be part of the system. They explain, against images of the various street parties and protests, office raids and the graffiti-ing of banks occurring at that time, and a lively soundtrack, that he has been enslaved by the system. José goes along with it, but in return tries to teach them that the majority of people actually want this system.

In summary, Jo Sol uses the 'people as protagonists' vs 'judicial system as antagonists' format which not only functions as a plot driving device, but also helps to fulfil Bill

Nichols' definition of politically reflexive film. Through the fake narrative and character of José the taxi driver seeking refuge among the Barcelona *Okupas* what we actually see is a critical investigation of the socio-politics in Barcelona surrounding neoliberalism and the post-Olympic gentrification of the city as it navigates its new status as 'global city'. This theme is first explored in *En Construcción,* where the tone is one of curiosity and concern for the affected in a gentle, observational criticism of the gap between rich and poor. In *De nens* the tone is one of outrage at the authorities, and in *Ciuta morta* it is accusatory. In *taxista ful* the tone is more playful, and ironic sense of humour created through juxtaposition, highlights the complexity of the situation. The line between fiction and documentary is so blurred in *El taxista ful*, that labelling it as a creative documentary is arguable, perhaps it would be more appropriate to call it 'neoneorealist', as Waintrop does because it almost seems to be approaching documentary from the prespective of fiction, rather than the other way around (Waintrop, 2006).

La plaga

Perhaps the most well-known example of film to blur the line between fiction and documentary to the point where it is unclear which category the film belongs to is *La plaga (The Plague)* (Ballús, 2013) which won 'best film' rather than 'best documentary' at the Catalan academy awards in 2014. The award suggests a general recognition that a film need not be one or the other, and that the borders between the two modes of filmmaking are fluid. The Flaherty/Guerín manner of working allows Ballús to create what has been described by commentators as a 'humanist' portrayal of protagonists in *La plaga* (Ibarz, 2013). *La plaga* is a character-led documentary that was filmed at the end of a hot summer and the overarching narrative is directly related to the weather. The high-pressure system that builds up before the storm is reflected in each of the characters' lives, emotions, and frustrations as they navigate the on-going economic crisis. The film resembles fiction in

that the storm at the end of the film sees some form of resolution for each protagonist's narrative trajectory.

Raül, the Catalan farmer, has his attempts to tap in to the organic market frustrated by a plague of white fly that sabotage his crops. The only organic way to get rid of the white fly is heavy rainfall, which immediately ties his life chances to the weather. This has a knock-on effect on Iurie, a Moldavian immigrant who Raül has hired off the books as a farm-hand. Iurie is attempting to get Spanish residency, but to do this he needs a contract, and his hopes of getting one from Raül begin to disintegrate along with the crops. Raül's neighbour, Maria, suffers from respiratory problems, possibly brought on by age but worsened by the weather, and is taken to the local care-home, where she is looked after by Rosemarie, a Filipino immigrant who lives with her sister.

Rosemarie's troubles are subtler and related to her experience of moving to Spain from the Philippines. The weather has turned her skin black, but when her sister points this out to her she states, 'I no longer care about the colour of my skin, this is my natural colour after all'. They joke about going topless on the beach like the people on the news, and although they are playing with the idea, it's quickly thrown out as not for them. Besides, they work 12-hour shifts and have no time to enjoy the beach lifestyle of the area they have moved to. The fifth character is Maribel, a Spanish prostitute who has lived in Catalonia for 20 years. Her regular spot is at the end of the road that leads to Raül's farm, Maria's house, and the care home. Her frustration arises from the fact that she's losing work as she ages, and the economic crisis means that she doesn't have any hope of being able to get a job. Her troubles are less directly related to the weather although the heat does prevent her from earning as much as she might usually.

The protagonists are not portrayed as being in control of their own destinies, and there is an emphasis in the dialogue on having patience, holding on, getting on with things while

waiting for changes to become permanent. The most repeated phrase is 'I don't have a choice'. So, throughout the film they are locked into the daily grind of life in the interstices and the claustrophobic sepia tone of the film and the constant sound of crickets adds to the oppressive atmosphere as well as signalling the incredible heat. Tiredness is a common complaint. However, signs of hope begin the night before the long-awaited storm when Barça win a match. The next day the weather report predicts heavy rainfall and the sepia tone is replaced with a cool blue as we see the unusually empty care home and hear the distant role of thunder. The first raindrops fall on Maribel's abandoned chair, signalling that she has moved on with her life The downpour brings relief to the remaining protagonists' suffering, and in the case of Raül and Rosemarie, it gives them an excuse to spend time together while they shelter and break out of the routine. The plague of white fly is washed away and the day after the storm brings bird song rather than crickets. Raül spend time with his children, and Rosemarie sits with Maria in hospital, supporting her in a more personal than professional capacity, making links with the people in her new life.

It can be understood as falling into the Guerín school of filmmaking in that Ballús spent four years with her protagonists before filming, and the film is an observational and poetic piece in which the narrative is created in the edit around the passage of time marked through the change of seasons, as in *En Construccion* and *El Sol de Membrillo*. It uses character, narrative, plot, colour, and musical score to draw you in to this world she is portraying with what has been described by numerous critics as a humanistic touch. *La Plaga* celebrates the inherent subjectivity of documentary filmmaking so much so that it is taken as fiction by many. Ballús states that although the characters and the events of the film are 'real' (unscripted) and she did her research as if it were a documentary, the shoot was planned as if it were a fiction, and in her mind, the solitary lives of the characters and the location make it more of a contemporary Western than a documentary (Seidel-Hollaender 2013). Furthermore, she views it as a portrait of the people in the film, and

stresses the subjectivity of the way in which the protagonists are portrayed. The crew was so small and they spent so much time with the protagonists before filming that Ballús had quite a lot of control as director, and the film is therefore her vision of the lives of the five protagonists. Like *El sol de membrillo* and *En construcción*, it is a film that takes its structure from the passing of seasons, and this could be in part down to the amount of time spent preparing and filming all three of these observational, poetic films.

The filmmaker, although not visible on screen, is present and her proximity to the protagonists is visible through her intimate portrayal of them. As in *En Construcción* and *La leyenda del tiempo,* this may include scenes that are set up with shot/counter shot, but they are set up in order to let a certain aspect of a personality shine through. This is especially obvious both in the scene of the 'prophetic builder' in *En construcción,* and many scenes involving Maria in *La plaga.* Through spending time with the protagonists, and getting to know them, Guerín, Ballús and Lacuesta would then ask them to return to a previous conversation, although this time with cameras. Unscripted, the protagonists play themselves in these scenes, while at other times they are simply filmed going about their life and thus, they transverse between object and subject-playing-object, as do the actors in *Buenaventura Durutti, anarquista*.

This combination of a humanist portrayal of groups of people at a specific moment in space and time, a clearly detectable authorial voice, and beautiful cinematography as well as hints of narrative is what makes *La plaga* popular with audiences and critics alike. *La plaga* inhabits the space between fact and fiction through an observational and poetic approach.

Despite the director's statements about it being a portrait of a group of people, shot in the style of a Western, *La plaga* is generally received as a documentary about the impact of globalisation on a small, community on the outskirts of a big city, and thus can be seen as

adhering to the theme of 'the city and transformations'. In the programme for the 2013 Berlinale, it is described as 'an impressive hybrid of documentary and fiction, an account of life in Barcelona, Spain, and ultimately Europe too' (Berlinale, 2013). Unlike *En construcción*, *De nens, El taxista ful* and *Ciutat morta*, *La plaga* contributes a more positive portrayal of communities in times of change. There is no antagonist here, just a group of people of varying backgrounds coping with whatever is thrown at them, and helping each other where they can.

With a humanist touch, it eschews the trend for political criticism. Rather, it focuses on how this peripheral community adapts to Barcelona's rapid transformation into a global city, and how new arrivals from all over the world adapt to Barcelona, and Catalonia's complex linguistic landscape. Iurie speaks Spanish but, as with many immigrants, exposure to Catalan means that his Spanish is actually a mix of the two. This level of linguistic verisimilitude shows that he is integrating into the local culture, supported by the fact that he fights for a local club, supports Barcelona, which is itself both a global and a local signifier. However, the film does not shy away from showing the effects that this has on his native language. When speaking in Romanian on the phone to his girlfriend back home, he stands by a motorway that separates the local rural area from the urban and global Barcelona, underneath the bridge that links the two. After having an argument in Romanian, he states in Spanish that it seems like they are speaking different languages, in a scene which powerfully portrays the experience of the immigrant. Writing in *El País*, Jordi Costa focuses on how the humanist tone of *La plaga* reflects on societal transformation, but without lamenting the loss of a way of life, or of criticising the effects that the globalisation of Barcelona has had on its citizens, whether local or immigrant. Rather, *La plaga* simply accepts that Barcelona has become a global city, and muses upon the way this has changed local communities.

> This supposed twilight Western that ends up creating a political and generously humanist founding narrative about new relationships and resistances, because the final sentiment of *La plaga* is not so much that of registering the disappearance of a way of life, but rather a proposal for strengthening a new one, based on the communication with and understanding of the Other, in what may first appear as a besieged land. (Costa, 2013).

Conclusion; Towards a *Cinema Barceloní*

This chapter has explored the idea of *cine barceloní* within the creative documentary format that has proliferated throughout the 2000s and into the 2010s. Analysis has focused on four films in particular that deal with 'the city and transformations', identified as a major theme within contemporary Catalan documentary by Torriero (Torreiro, 2010). All films develop an approach to the space between documentary and fiction but *De nens* and *Ciutat morta* can be understood to have roots in the Jordà school, whereas *El taxista ful* and *La plaga* have developed an aesthetic associated more closely with the Guerín school. The analysis finds that that these films are overwhelmingly critical of the effects that the Barcelona Model of urban regeneration has had on the inhabitants of Barcelona who do not have the means to participate in Barcelona's new identity as a modern, global, and creative city. In doing so, they continue with a trend for lending a voice to the issues faced by marginalised sections of society, which was a major commonality between the first three films of the documentary strand of the New Catalan Cinema, as explored in chapter three.

However, they each take a different critical and aesthetic approach to the topic. *De nens* criticises the way in which serious court cases are used as an excuse for sanitising poorer areas of the city where inhabitants cannot participate in Barcelona's new image. *Ciutat morta* also criticises the methods of 'sanitisation' used in areas of Barcelona, but focuses on how it affects those who refuse to comply; the *Okupas*. More specifically in the case of Patricia, it reveals the damage done to those who are mistaken for *Okupas* based on their personal style choices. *El taxista ful* puts those who cannot comply into contact with those

who refuse to comply, and in doing so, creates a reflection on the differences between these two communities who occupy a position outside of the official, mainstream society and by their very existence, demonstrate that the new Barcelona is not for everyone. *La plaga* takes this discussion out of the centre of the city, to the surrounding areas in which the rural way of life has changed because of globalised Barcelona and takes a sympathetic and hopeful, rather than critical, approach to the topic.

To place these films within a wider discussion of creative documentary of the New Catalan Cinema, they demonstrate that it is far from hegemonic, even when dealing with the same theme. Furthermore, the distinctly *barceloní* content and context complicate the idea of a homogenous Catalan national cinema. When we consider that genre films such as *Vicki Cristina Barcelona* and *Barcelona, nit d'estiu* can also be considered *barceloní* in content and context, but which represent an almost oppositional portrayal of Barcelona, it is just as impossible to speak of a homogenous cine *barceloní*. What we see in the films discussed in this chapter is not Catalan national discourse, but rather, the use of cinema to create an identifiably Barcelonan discourse that articulates an aesthetic and thematic resistance to the dominant rhetoric of Barcelona as a global capital and tourist destination. This works to qualify the calls from Comas and Torreiro to be mindful when labelling films as Catalan or Barcelonan whilst also demonstrating that definitions of national cinema can be extended to city cinemas. In the case of Barcelonan cinema this complicates ideas of a homogenous Catalan cinema and highlights that just as Spanish cinema is both internally fragmented, so too is Catalan cinema. This thesis has now examined films which challenge the notion of Catalan cinema from within. Working from the inside out, so to speak, the next chapters proceed to examine films which are identifiably Catalan in content and context, before examining those which can be understood as Catalan, Spanish, and global.

Chapter Five

Historical Dramas and Biopics: *Cinema Català*

Having examined the creative documentaries that characterise the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, as well as a number of films in that mode that are best studied in relation to ideas of Barcelonan Cinema, the thesis now turns its attention toward modes of filmmaking that are more obviously associated with ideas of a Catalan national cinema; historical dramas and biopics. Belén Vidal writes that the heritage film has become 'a supple term to refer to the ways in which the ways in which national cinemas turn to the past at different moments in their histories in search of foundational myths' (Vidal, 2012, p. 10). And although the term 'heritage film' does not necessarily apply to the films discussed here, Crameri writes that 'Catalonia's past has become a constant presence in twenty-first century debates about independence' (Crameri, 2014, p. 73). There was a spate of Catalan films to deal with historical subject matter during the Transition to Democracy, which was another moment when Catalan nationhood was being constructed. Among the films of the Transition to do so are *La ciutat cremada* (*La ciudad quemada*, 'The Burnt city') (Antoni Ribas, 1976) the first feature film in the Catalan language after the Dictatorship, which dealt with the *Setmana Tràgica* ('The Tragic Week') of 1901 when there was an uprising in Barcelona against the conscription of civilians for the Spanish colonial war in North Africa. *La vieja memoria* (Jaime Camino, 1979), was a documentary about survivors of the Civil War and *Companys, procés a Catalunya* (*Companys, proceso a Cataluña,* 'Catalonia on Trial') (Josep Maria Forn, 1979) was about the trial and execution of Lluís Companys, the exiled president of the *Generalitat* during the Spanish Civil War.

With the Transition to Democracy, and the *Pacto del Olvido* (Pact of Forgetting) that facilitated this, recent history became taboo in both Spain and Catalonia. Historical dramas are therefore largely absent from both cinemas until the 2000s, when, in the context of the

recuperation of historical memory and what Carla Subirana calls the 'rebellion of the grandchildren' against the pact of silence, history and historical memory are once more major themes in various modes of filmmaking. (Carla Subirana, cited in Martí Olivella, 2013, p. 52). In New Catalan Cinema, Catalan history and identity is a theme of many documentaries, and Martí Olivella explores *Nedar* (*Nadar*, 'Swimming') (Subirana, 2008), *Bucharest la memòria perduda* (*Bucharest, la memoria perdida*, 'Bucharest, The Lost Memory') (Solé, 2008) and *Bicicleta, cullera, poma* (*Bicicleta, cuchara, manzana*, *Bicycle, Spoon, Apple*) (Bosch, 2010) as 'three films dealing with the ravages of Alzheimer's disease in this historical moment' that 'create a narrative that bespeaks a national claim, Catalonia's claim neither to forget nor to be forgotten' (Martí Olivella, 2013, p. 57).

As one objective of this thesis is to develop the discussion of New Catalan Cinema beyond documentary cinema to include genre, this chapter focuses on historical dramas and biopics. The historical drama offers much in the way of understanding the New Catalan Cinema in context because as Chapman points out in relation in his study of British historical film and national identity, 'a historical feature film will often have as much to say about the present in which it is made, as about the past in which it was set' (Chapman, 2005, p. 1). In the context of Catalonia recovering from a temporary amnesia caused by the *Pacto del Olvido*, and of favourable conditions for Catalan genre production in the mid-2000s as discussed in chapter two, from 2006 onwards there were a significant number of productions to address Catalan history and identity with a serious and purposeful tone. That all of the films discussed here fared well commercially confirms a trend within the New Catalan Cinema for making and watching films which construct, articulate and problematise Catalan history and national identity on the big screen, often using history to do so.

However, although D'Lugo observes that the multiple expressions of Catalanism in film may lead us to consider it as a national cinema, the aim of the chapter is not to further

justify claims of a Catalan national cinema. The films discussed here may have a place in constructing the contemporary historical narrative of Catalan national identity, but rather than using this to proclaim the existence of a Catalan national cinema, this chapter 'delves deep into the pathologies of national discourses and exposes the symbolic practices of these forms of enunciation' (Hayward, 2000, p. 101). The pathologies of national discourses in the New Catalan Cinema, which can be understood as Barcelonan, Catalan, Spanish and transnational depending on the approach taken to studying the films, are seen to be constructed and articulated through complicated symbolic practices. Thus, this discussion of Catalan historical cinema takes place within a framework that 'perceives cinema as a practice that should not conceal structures of power and knowledge but which should function as a *mise-en-scene* of scattered and dissembling identities as well a fractured subjectivities and hegemonies' (Hayward, 2000, p. 101). This framework facilitates a discussion of the ways in which these films can be seen to reflect more about the context in which they are made rather than that within which they are set. However, particular attention is paid to the specific mechanisms behind this process, so as not to assume meaning.

> we must always be alert to the danger of reading films simply to prove our own preconceived theories or of making film-makers agents in a historical process of which they themselves were completely unaware. Only by close, empirically based investigation of the historical contexts of production and reception is it possible to establish what were the intentions of film-makers and the extent to which the meanings in the films that may now seem obvious to us were identified by contemporaries
>
> (Chapman, 2005, p. 319)

Jarvie observes that 'at most a national cinema can be a contribution to nation building, neither necessary nor sufficient'(Jarvie, 2000, p. 80). However, the policies and institutions surrounding the New Catalan Cinema place a significant amount of importance on the relationship between nation and cinema, even if filmmakers do not. As explored in chapter two, Isona Passola's speech at the Gaudí Awards reflects the Catalan Academy of Film's

position on the links between cinema and nationhood; 'without cinema, there is no nation' (*VIII Premis Gaudí de l'Acadèmia del Cinema Català (31/01/2016)*, no date). Thus, the framework in which these films are made, at least the part of the framework that is linked to Catalonia and Barcelona, is geared towards nation building.

The films chosen for examination are, in order of release; *Salvador (Puig Antich)* (Manuel Huerga, 2006), *El Coronel Macià* (Josep Maria Forn, 2006), *Bruc; la llegenda (Bruc; el desfío, Bruc; The Manhunt)* (Daniel Benmayor, 2010), *Pa negre (Pan negro, Black Bread)* (Villaronga, 2010)*, Fènix 11.23* (Joel Joan & Sergi Lara, 2012), and *13 dies d'Octubre* ('13 Days in October') (Carlos Marques Marcet, 2015). However, grouping them in terms of themes and subject matter facilitates a more in-depth analysis of their place within a Catalan historical narrative of resistance. *Bruc, la llegenda* is an action film based on a Catalan legend about a boy who defeated Napoleon's advancing troops in 1808, placing the narrative over a century before the politics of the 20th century and using a fictional, rather than historical, hero. However, the use of landscape, language, narrative and metaphor construct a multilingual and transnational Catalan identity tied to territory. As such, the film can be used to explore the narration of a Catalan linguistic resistance to monolingualism by founding this multilingual identity in legend, landscape and history.

El Coronel Macià narrates the story of Francesc Macià, a General in the Spanish Army who became president of Catalonia and declared it a 'republic within the Iberian federation' in 1931, before he died in 1933 and was replaced by Lluís Companys. Companys was democratically elected as president upon Macià's death, and *13 dies d'octubre* narrates the last thirteen days of his life, from the moment he was returned to Spain by the Gestapo (who had detained him in France where he was exiled), until his execution in 1940. In 2007 the 'law of democratic memory' was passed by the Catalan government which was designed to facilitate;

> The recuperation, commemoration, and promotion of democratic memory in Catalonia (1931-1980), more specifically, the Second Republic, the Republican Generalitat, the Civil War and the victims for ideological, conscientious, religious or social reasons, as well as the repression of individuals and collectives on behalf of the Francoist Dictatorship, including in that the Catalan language and culture, exile and deportation.
>
> (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009)

Made and released just after this law was passed and the Catalan statute of autonomy had been re-written and approved, *El coronel Macià* reflects on Macià's life and the lead-up to the Second Republic with a generally positive tone. Made and released after the measures for increased autonomy in this statute were reversed by the Spanish Constitutional Court, and after numerous referendums on independence in Catalonia had been declared unconstitutional, *13 dies d'octubre* has a much more sombre tone. However, in reflecting upon the rise and fall of Catalonia's development as a nation during the Second Republic, *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre* can be analysed in terms of how they draw parallels with the contemporary process of Catalan nation-building. More obviously, these two films narrate political resistance.

Salvador (Puig Antich), narrates the life of an anarchist from Catalonia who was put on trial and executed in 1974, the last person in Spain to have been executed by garrotte. His story is one of Leftist anti-Franco resistance during the late stages of the Dictatorship, and as such does not initially appear to articulate any specifically Catalan nationalism. However, it is explored here in relation to the blurring of Leftism and *Catalanisme* in Catalan narratives of anti-Franco resistance. *Fènix 11.23* is a biopic of another civilian, the young Èric Bertran, who was investigated and put on trial for terrorism by the Spanish Supreme Court in 2004 for demanding that supermarkets label their goods in Catalan. *Fènix 11.23* therefore focuses on a much more recent history, one that bleeds into the present. The portrayal of Èric's story bears much resemblance to that of Salvador it can be explored in terms of the parallels being drawn between the state's treatment of Catalonia in

the 2000s, and at the end of the Franco Dictatorship. These two films can also be seen to articulate political resistance on a personal level.

Pa negre is a literary adaptation of two of Emili Teixidor's novels; *Retrat d'un assassí d'ocells* ('Portrait of a Bird Killer') (1988) and *Pa negre* ('Black Bread') (Teixidor, 2003). The film is set in rural post-war Catalonia and therefore differs from the other films in that the protagonist is the fictional Andreu (Francesc Colomer). However, through its historical setting and treatment of taboo topics such as the actions that people on both sides of the Civil War committed in order to survive, it represents a significant contribution to the discussion of the historical drama as a vehicle through which to articulate contemporary attitudes toward the past. It complicates the narration of Catalonia as a site of homogeneous resistance to Franco, and therefore questions the blurring of Leftism and *Catalanisme* in contemporary discourse.

Together, these films articulate a complicated Catalan national identity that is natural, historical, socio-political, and personal. It is possible to see the narration of a Catalan national identity that is portrayed as timeless, with its origins firmly tied to landscape (as in *Bruc*), but which is also portrayed as manifest in politicians (*El Coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'ocubre*) and civilians (*Salvador* and *Fènix 1123*) that is complicated by a national political identity that is split along a 'Left/Right espanyolista/catalanista' four-way axis (*Pa negre*).

Naturalising National Identity: *Bruc; la llegenda* (Daniel Benmayor 2010)

Bruc, la llegenda is based on a Catalan folk tale about a boy, Joan (Juan José Ballesta), in the village of Bruc who forces the Napoleonic Army into retreat by using the mountain of Montserrat to amplify and echo his banging of a drum, making it sound like a large army is approaching. In doing so he temporarily saves his village, Catalonia and Spain from invasion. For this he receives retribution from the French in the form of death warrant, and

the film narrates the French manhunt for Joan and his flight, and eventual fight, which leads to glory. It was arguably the first 'pre-modern warfare historical action film' in Catalonia (and Spain) and it follows the established genre norms; a double sided revenge story with a reluctant hero, a romantic sub plot and numerous action scenes which lead up to the final face-off between good and evil (Directe.cat, 2010). The film has been criticised for its superficial treatment of the characters and the simple distinction between good and evil, being described as 'Catalan Rambo', 'like a video game' and with 'one-dimensional, stereotypical characters' (Quintana, 2010). However, despite these criticisms, *Bruc la llegenda* is the third cinematic production of this legend and it can be seen to address issues of Catalan identity at the time of production, as did the two films before it. The first, *El tambor de Bruch* ('The drum of Bruch') (Ignacio F. Iquino, 1947) was a cinematic production of this legend in which signs of Catalan identity, at that time prohibited, managed to slip past the censors imposed by the Dictatorship. In *El tambor de Bruch*, the Catalan echo of 'Visca l'independència!' after the Castilian 'Viva la independencia!' has been described as 'a battered but insistent Catalan national alternative […which] necessarily troubles, by pluralizing, the referential force of the "fatherland".' (Epps, 2012, p. 50).

The second, *El timbaler del Bruc* (*La leyenda del Tambor*, 'The Drummer of Bruc') (Grau, 1982), was made at the end of the Transition to Democracy and in a context of increased support for nationalist parties in the historical nationalities. The titles at the beginning put a distinctly Catalan angle on the historical context of the myth, setting it within the context of the Napoleonic War. *El timbaler de Bruc* is awash with visual references to Catalan culture, in a celebration of the renewed visibility of Catalan symbols of identity. Caparrós Lera summarises as follows:

> Coproduced with Mexico and following a model of commercial cinema, it is a work of low art, but with an overexcited obliging nationalism, closer to romantic legend than rigorous history, that possesses pronounced sentimental touches and

> definite narrative correction, sustained by a successful formal brilliancy with regards to the scenic Catalan locations of Montserrat, Sampador and other spots where the exotic meets the picturesque.
>
> (Caparrós Lera, 2001, p. 111)

Bruc; la llegenda can also be discussed in relation to censorship, although not of the political kind. At the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, film professionals in Barcelona were concerned that the market can be seen as another form of censorship on Catalan identity in film, because of the difficulties that Catalan-language films face in the Spanish marketplace (Bellmunt et al. 2001). Thus, the legend of Bruc has repeatedly appeared in cinema as an articulation of reactions to censorship of Catalan language and symbols of identity, whether political or economic. *Bruc; la llegenda* navigates this perceived linguistic censorship through filming multiple language versions; filming the same scenes in different languages in order to gain access into foreign markets, changing character names and cultural references as they did so. The original version of *Bruc; la llegenda* is in Catalan and French, but there is also a Spanish and French version and a Spanish dubbed version, of which there are almost four times as many copies (Directe.cat, 2010).

The use of multiple-language version filming was not only a strategy, along with using well-known French actors, to gain access to foreign markets. Here, it is understood as a strategy used to access subsidies from the *Generalitat* for films with their original version in the Catalan language, whilst also providing a linguistic version that more people would watch, given the linguistic preferences for films in the Castilian language in both Catalonia and Spain. Examining the multiple language versions of *Bruc; la llegenda* suggests that this film can be seen to house, or articulate, the complexities of Catalan national-linguistic identity whilst also being able to circulate as a Spanish or French genre film on international circuits. After all, it is co-produced between Catalan (*Ikiru films, Televisió de*

Catalunya), Spanish (*El Toro Pictures, Telefónica producciones)* and French (*Mesfilms*) companies under the umbrella of Universal Pictures. It is also funded by both Catalan and Spanish public (*Institut Català de les Industries Culturals, Insitituto de Crédito Oficial, Instituto de la Cinematografia y de les Artes Audiovisuales*) and private (*Telefónica, Televisió de Catalunya)* sources.

If market forces are a contemporary form of censorship of the Catalan language in cinema, as is reflected in the multiple linguistic versions of *Bruc; la llegenda*, then the use of landscape to articulate Catalan identity in those versions where the Catalan language does not feature is of great significance. Epps suggests that landscape functioned as a signifier of Catalan-ness when language, the most obvious signifier, was prohibited during the Dictatorship in his analysis of *El tambor de Bruch*, writing that 'the Catalan language is reduced to little more than a sonorous or scripted blip, [but] that other mainstay of national identity, land, proves more obdurate in its insistence' (Epps, 2012, p. 71). In *Bruc la llegenda*, landscape is central to the plot. Whereas in the first two films the defeat of the French is attributed to the cleverness of the drummer, in *Bruc la llegenda* it is attributed to the mountain of Montserrat: 'a signifier of Catalan identity that is timeless and linked to territory, history, and tradition' (Nogué and Vicente, 2004).

Unlike the previous two films, which depict the events leading up to the battle, this narrative begins after the battle is already over and depicts the vengeful manhunt for the protagonist Joan. In the opening scene it is established that the battle has already taken place as a crane shot scans the valley and a dying French soldier recounts how they heard a large army approaching. Maraval (Vincent Perez), the French officer who will hunt Joan, fires a shot and, noticing the echo that the mountain provides, realises that the 'army of hundreds' was in fact the echo provided by Montserrat. In the next scene the bilingual French journalist, Henri Magne (Justin Blankaert) asks Joan to tell him what happened and he replies that 'it was the mountain'. As he is saying this, the voice of the mountain

(provided by Catalan singer Beth) increases in volume and a tilt shot brings one of the mountain's peaks into full view, introducing a flashback to the battle. Joan's scream of anger then links the flashback to a return shot of the peak, before tilting back down to the conversation, where Joan repeats that 'it was the mountain, and the Virgin of Montserrat', incorporating Catholicism into the myth of a natural Catalan identity.

Sound, camerawork, dialogue and editing link Joan's memory with that of the mountain, and from this moment on numerous other devices are used to symbolically connect Joan with Montserrat until the moment when he uses coal, a product of the land, to disguise himself and retreat inside the mountain to kill Maraval. Epps describes Montserrat as 'mythically charged' and 'a signal emblem of Catalan culture' in reference to *El tambor de Bruch* (Epps, 2012, p. 71). In *Bruc, la llegenda* Montserrat is central to the narrative of Joan's heroic defeat of the French, who, unlike in previous versions, targeted their revenge on him personally.

The villain, Maraval, is marked as the Other in all linguistic versions of the film because of his status as a monolingual French speaker. All other characters in the *Bruc; la llegenda* are either bilingual French/Catalan in the original language version, or bilingual French/Spanish in the Castilian language version. Thus, in saving Catalonia and Spain from invasion in the bilingual versions of the film, Joan preserves the multicultural, multilingual Catalan society that he inhabits by defeating the monolingual enemy representing a centralised, monolingual nation-state. He is persecuted for this, and the battle becomes personalised. This resembles the narrative of Catalonia as 'victim and benefactor' of Spain, which is explored by Fernando León Solís in Spanish and Catalan press coverage of the World Cup championships of 1994 and 2002 and the general elections of 1996 and 2000, as well as the presentation of the New Catalan Statute of Autonomy to Spanish parliament in 2005 (León Solís, 2003, 2010). However, Joan's

eventual defeat of the enemy leads to a happy ending, rather than one which leads to martyrdom. This is emphasised by being reunited with his (French-Catalan) fiancée who had at one point been taken hostage.

The use of landscape may suggest that Catalan identity is articulated as timeless, but despite the fact that *Bruc* is an action-adventure film based on a legend, links to history are emphasised in the prologue and epilogue.

> "On 6 June 1808, the aim of Napoleon Bonaparte's invincible army was to destroy the Spanish army's gunpowder store and so control the whole of Europe. With only 25km to its objective, the Grande Armée, for the first time in its history knew [sic] the bitter taste of defeat at the Sacred Mountain of Montserrat. A defeat that encouraged all oppressed peoples to fight for freedom".

Being based on a legend, this prologue does not attempt to reveal the origins of truth in the story, as do the prologues to *El coronel Macià*, *Salvador*, *Fènix 1123* or *13 dies d'Octubre*. Rather, it situates the viewer in a very specific time and place in European history, as well as introducing the significance of Montserrat. It also emphasises the importance of what is about to be portrayed for the future of 'oppressed peoples', whomever the spectator might interpret these people as being. Immediately after the prologue, the camera pans down from open blue sky to the mountain of Montserrat and through this edit, it is established that the 'oppressed people' in this film are those who belonged to this mountain in 1808. This speaks directly to the contemporary audience who identify as Catalan, for whom Montserrat is a symbol of their identity now, and this facilitates parallels to be drawn between the contemporary Catalan society, and that which is represented on screen. The epilogue is a quote from Napoleon that cements the supposed role of the drummer from Bruc in the end of the Napoleon Empire, framing him as a hero that can be read as Catalan or Spanish depending on the linguistic version of the film, and the nationality with which the viewer identifies: 'Ah the war of Spain, that damn war was the origin of the tragedy of France, (Napoleon Bonaparte, 1816)'.

In *Bruc; la llegenda*, the Catalan and Spanish languages are never featured in the same linguistic version, so questions of a possible Self/Other relationship between Catalonia and Spain do not interfere. In the original version, which features the Catalan and French languages, the hero is Catalan-speaking Joan. The hero of the version in which the Catalan language scenes have been filmed again in Castilian is Spanish-speaking Juan, also played by the Spanish-speaking Juan José Ballesta Muñoz, who learned Catalan for the role. He does not speak much French in either bilingual versions, but his character understands the French characters when they speak to him. There are numerous bilingual characters in the village of Bruc; Joan's love interest Glòria (Astrid Bergès-Frisbey), her half-French father Dr. Ballart (Fransesc Albiol), and Magne the journalist. Their dialogue, when filmed again in Castilian does not change the film. However, De la Mata (Santi Millan) is a Catalan mercenary fighting for the French, and his role as translator is often central to the action. In the Castilian dubbed version, where all characters speak Castilian, this interferes with the action because many of his lines are redundant; he appears to be simply repeating what other characters say. This has the effect of delaying the action, and the purpose of his character is lost. As D'Lugo observes, 'like Catalonia itself, Catalan cinema challenges the assumption of a Spain as a unified cultural unit by mobilizing a variety of discourses of regional identity in opposition to that cultural otherness' (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 164). Whether intentionally or not, the awkward presence of De la Mata's surplus lines in the dubbed version highlight the redundancy and enforced nature of the desire for an 'indivisible' and monocultural Spanish state that characterises the attitude the Partido Popular takes to 'the Catalan issue' as they return to government in 2011.

The Castilian dubbed version, allows for the reading of Joan (in this version 'Juan') as the victim and redeemer of Spain, although this time as a Spanish hero. In Spain, the Napoleonic War is called the 'War of Independence' and is recognised as one of the 'founding mythologised moments' for Spanish nationalism (Triana-Toribio, 2003, p. 4).

While there were internal tensions (both in Spain and Catalonia) because of mostly class-based differences in opinion about which of Ferdinand the Eighth's children should rule, Napoleon's brother took the throne. It is perhaps because of this that Duncan Wheeler reads *Bruc; la llegenda* as distinctly Spanish, proving its versatility when it comes to questions of national identity.

> While no Spanish film has yet to really embrace the troublesome fact that the War of Independence was in fact something of a civil war – and that it was the intervention of the British that led to the French retreat – *Bruc* is by some margin the most overtly nationalistic film made on the subject since the early Francoist period.
>
> (Wheeler, 2014, p. 223)

Bruc la llegenda may be a multinational production of which many more of the Castilian-dubbed copies are available than either the original version or Spanish French version for economic reasons. However, its multiple language versions allow for a number of different interpretations of the legend. In the Castilian dubbed version, as Wheeler points out, Joan can be read as a Spanish national hero for Spanish audiences. This goes for international audiences too, as the version with English subtitles is the Castilian dubbed version. However, through tying the character of Joan to the landscape, the hero's identity as Catalan is granted presence in all linguistic versions for those who wish to see it. A viewer who identifies as Catalan, regardless of whether or not they know the legend, can watch the Castilian dubbed version and understand that Joan is Catalan because of his synchronisation with a symbol of Catalan national identity, the land. Thus, as in *El tambor de Bruch*, landscape functions as a way of addressing *Bruc, la llegenda* to a Catalan audience in a context where the Catalan language is perceived as censored in cinema. Furthermore, and with regards to those linguistic versions featuring multiple languages, he is constructed as either a Spanish speaking Catalan Juan, or Catalan-speaking Catalan Joan.

The changing linguistic identity of Joan and the inhabitants of Bruc is, in all versions of the film except the Castilian dubbed version, framed in opposition to a monolingual

centralised nation state that threatens their way of life. This reflects the context in which the film was made; co-productions and filming in the Catalan language are two main aims of Catalan film policy in the late 2000s and producers can access extra levels of funding in Catalonia by filming the original versions in Catalan, as discussed in chapter two. However, although these policies were designed to promote a Catalan language cinema, the reality of the film market creates a situation in which filming multiple language versions becomes a strategy for bilingual co-productions such as *Bruc; la llegenda* to reach a wider public. One legacy left behind by censorship during the Franco Dictatorship is the singularity of the Castilian language in Spanish Cinema, as discussed previously. In order to reach the wider Spanish audience and become a profitable endeavour, the duplicitous and changing linguistic identity of Joan must become monolingual and Castilian-speaking.

However, the effect of this is that in all versions Joan's Catalan-ness is perceptible, and naturalised, through the timeless feature of landscape. This links the historical setting of this local legend to present-day Catalonia and creates, whether intentionally or not, a discourse of national identity that is tied to land. Committing this legend about a Catalan national hero to screen at a time when Catalan nationhood and the future of the nation are features of Catalan media and politics reflect the contexts of production surrounding previous cinematic versions of this legend. Constructing Joan as a Catalan national hero who experiences hardship for his dedication to saving the nation but ultimately overcomes hardship makes *Bruc; la llegenda* one example of how 'Catalonia's national heroes have come to the fore over recent years, and are explicitly commended as an example to other Catalans' (Crameri, 2014, p. 75).

Reclaiming History: *El coronel Macià* (Josep Maria Forn 2006) and *13 dies d'octubre* (Carlos Marques Marcet 2014)

Josep Maria Forn and Carlos Marqués Marcet represent two different generations of Catalan cinema, but both *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre* revisit, rewrite and rearticulate Catalan political history from a contemporary perspective as they both focus on the presidents of Catalonia to have proclaimed it a republic in the twentieth century. Forn has been making films since the 1950s and is a central figure in many of the institutions that have facilitated the growth of Catalan cinema into something that can now be understood as 'something like a national cinema', however the term may be defined. He was a founding member of the Institute of Catalan Cinema, the Academy of Catalan Cinema, The Association of Producers in Catalonia, and Catalan Films, as well as serving as president of the Association of Directors in Catalonia and Director General of Cinematography in the *Generalitat*'s Department of Culture (Rodríguez and Ramón Cortés, 2010). His commitment to Catalan issues and Catalan cinema also shows in his aforementioned film *Companys, procés a Catalunya.* An earlier film of his, *La piel quemada* ('Burnt Skin') (Forn, 1967), was made when he was associated with the *Escola de Barcelona* and it treats the then contemporary subject matter of immigration in Catalonia, juxtaposing the economic immigration of construction workers from poorer parts of Andalusia with that of the tourists from France and Germany. In *La piel quemada* we see Andalusians learning Catalan and English, as well as the Catalans speaking a mix of the two. In the context of the late 1960s as the Dictatorship had become a '*dictablanda*' ('soft dictatorship'), the censors allowed this presence of Catalan among other languages, a feature that would later become characteristic of New Catalan Cinema.

El coronel Macià is about Francesc Macià, who was a member of the Spanish military responsible for Barcelona who left the army after having disagreed with their treatment of Catalan cultural institutions. He founded the independentist party 'Estat Català' in 1922 and resisted the Miguel de Primo de Rivera Dictatorship in 1926, for which he was exiled. On his return in 1931 he reinstated the Catalan government, and was acting president until

elected in 1932, when he also proclaimed the 'Catalan republic within the Iberian federation', as part of the Second Spanish Republic, being the first person in the 20th century to do so.[12] With this, he reinstated the *Generalitat* that had been inactive since 1716. He was succeeded by Lluís Companys as leader of the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) and Catalan parliament. The analysis of *El cornel Macià* reveals that Macià is constructed not as a mythological or legendary Catalan national hero, but rather, a political Catalan national hero from Catalonia's more recent history, one which is palpably closer to the present.

El Coronel Macià begins with an intertitle that reads 'This is a fiction film inspired by historical characters and developments', basing the film in history, but acknowledging its status as a fiction film. An Irish character, Catalan-speaking Elizabeth Joyce (Molly Malcolm), narrates the film. She goes to Catalonia because she is writing a book about what is happening there, and initially writes for the Catalan satirical publication *Cu-Cut*, but whose headquarters are trashed by the Spanish military in 1905. She gets an interview with Macià (Abel Folk) and they remain in touch. She narrates his life in voice over, and mythologises him as a unique character whose actions are guided by a strong moral code. Considerable attention is paid to the personal struggles he faces when making his decision to leave the army. He also faces struggles in uniting the Catalan people, and faces increasing hostility from the Spanish military, against whom he leads an uprising and for which he is exiled. Suffering and struggle are therefore key characteristics of his life as portrayed in this film, although his character is always played as a calm, reasonable, and well-meaning.

[12] Catalan independence had previously been proclaimed in 988 from France (when it was then part of the Crown of Aragon), 1641 from Spain, proposed in 1712 from both (under the protection of the United Kingdom), proposed again in 1793 as a 'sister republique' of France, then between 1810-1812 Napoleon makes it independent under French control before annexing it between 1812-1814. Then in 1873 sovereignty within a Spanish federation was proclaimed, which would be repeated by Macià and Companys.

Visiting him while he is in exile, his wife Eugènia (Marta Marco) brings him cuttings from English, French, Italian, German and Swiss newspapers in which his fight for freedom is covered. 'They all speak with utmost respect about your fight', she summarises. This scene demonstrates that the world was watching him, as it is watching Catalonia now. Various Catalan news agencies translate or summarise newspaper articles about the current independence process into Catalan from around the world. *Vilaweb*, *The Catalan News Agency* and *El Nacional* are three main sources for these translations and summaries, and reflect a preoccupation about the international image being projected. Eugènia also brings him letters written by grateful civilians; 'they encourage you to continue the fight and are proud of you', she summarises, before cementing his place in the narrative of Catalan history for the contemporary viewer: 'You are our hero, you are the hero of Catalonia'. Elizabeth resumes her narration, now back in Ireland. 'The seductive figure of Coronel Macià and the romantic adventure of freeing his country wins the hearts of Europeans'. She narrates his return to Catalonia, and the succession of events that led to his proclaiming the Republic, over photographic documentation of these events.

The final scene of *El coronel Macià* plays the actual sound recording of Macià proclaiming the Catalan Republic within an Iberian Federation on the radio, layered over the sounds of a jubilant choir. The image is a photo of Macià at the time, and the use of real sound and image after watching the 'fiction film inspired by historical characters and developments' emphasises the 'real' of the film just watched. The image fades to one of two boys writing wishes on little pieces of paper and tying them to a kite, then running along a beach. This recalls an earlier scene in the film when Macià explains that he used to do this, a scene in which he says that although you should have your feet on the ground, there is no harm in dreaming big. This return to this metaphor of 'dreaming big', layered over Macià's speech, suggests that that was exactly what Macià was doing, given how history unfolded afterwards. However, the film ends on this positive note, and does not hint at what would

happen to his successor, Companys, who would be exiled and then executed. The final words spoken by Macià on the recording are '*Catalans, sapigeu fer-vos dignes de Catalunya*', which translates as 'Catalans, make yourselves worthy of Catalonia'. Macià is addressing this statement to the citizens of Catalonia in 1932, but replayed in the context of this film, it can also be seen to address the contemporary audience. This demonstrates what Crameri describes as the construction of a historical narrative that 'asks all of its citizens to be prepared to fight for a future state' (Crameri, 2014, p. 74).

Marqués Marcet graduated from audio visual communication at the Pompeu Fabra in 2006 and went on to study a Masters in Cinematographic Direction at UCLA before his first feature *10.000km* (Marques Marcet, 2014). *13 dies d'octubre* is the most recent film discussed here and is a TV movie, released approximately a month before the seventy-fifth anniversary of the execution of Lluis Companys, and revisiting the subject matter Forn's *Companys, process a Catalunya. 13 dies d'octubre* was broadcast on TV3, the Catalan public broadcaster, approximately a week before the 2015 Catalan elections, in which all political parties were obliged to declare their position on independence, facilitating a vote on independence without holding it outright, an act which was declared illegal by the Spanish courts (Nationalia, 2015). The choice of Marqués-Marcet, an upcoming Catalan director with a growing reputation for quality and nuance, and the choice of release date two days before the Catalan general election and on the 75th anniversary of Companys death, along with the fact that it was commissioned by the *Generalitat* and TV3 (which has the potential to reach many more viewers than if it were to be released in a cinema), all suggest that it is worth examining *13 dies d'octubre* within the processes surrounding the narration of Catalan history and nation building in contemporary Catalonia.

El coronel Macià narrated the beginning of the Second Republic in Catalonia, but *13 dies d'octubre* narrates the final days of president Lluís Companys' life as he is imprisoned, put on trial and executed at the beginning of the Franco Dictatorship. Companys led a Catalan

nationalist uprising in 1933 that was not supported by centre or centre-right Catalan parties, and in 1934 proclaimed a 'Catalan state within a Spanish Federal Republic'. He was sentenced to thirty years in prison for this. However, civil war began and he sided with the Republicans, unsuccessfully attempting to control and coordinate the different leftist factions. After the war he was exiled in France until he was brought back to Spain by the Gestapo in 1940. Thirteen days later, he was executed.

13 dies d'octubre begins with an intertitle which reads 'a story inspired by documents and statements from the time'. Like the opening intertitle in *El coronel Macià*, this prepares the ground for a piece of narrative fiction based on real events. We see Companys (Carles Martínez) taken secretly to the castle of Montjuïc in Barcelona, which was used as a prison and execution site during the Dictatorship and is therefore a symbol of oppression by the Franco regime. He awaits trial there, and is assigned a defence lawyer by the regime, Ramon de Colubí (Òscar Muñoz). Ramon is a convinced supporter of the regime, but is portrayed as trying his best to defend Companys against charges of military rebellion for his acts during the Second Republic and Civil War. In response to Companys' observation that the trial is a fallacy and his sentence a procedure, Ramon states obstinately, 'In Franco's Spain, justice is not just a pretty word, I am offering you an opportunity here, however small'. Both Ramon and Companys are portrayed as complex characters. Companys is portrayed throughout as having character flaws, mostly through his extra-marital affairs. In fact, at the beginning of the film, Ramon is the good lawyer, and Companys a desolate and reluctant defendant, resigned to his fate. The following dialogue between Companys and Ramon further represents the conscious effort to stay away from clear-cut narratives of the 'good' Companys against the 'bad' Franco regime. The dialogue also highlights that Ramon was also Catalan and so the relationship between these two men, which is a central focus of the film, is one between two Catalans on opposing sides of the Civil War and Dictatorship. Companys was a Left-wing Catalanist, and Ramon a Right-

wing *espanyolista*, which situates them in total opposition on the four-way Left/Right, *catalanista/espanyolista* political axis that shaped Catalonia then and now.

Companys: ¿De que se me acusa? (*What am I accused of?)*

Ramon: De promover el asesinato de inocentes, de hurto y estafa, y de delitos de rebelión contra el estado. (*Of promoting the assassination of innocent people, of theft and fraud, and of acts of rebellion*)

Companys: Usted formó parte del golpe del estado de 36 ¿verdad? *(You were part of the coup in '36, weren't you?)*

Ramon: Como muchos otros catalanes, formé parte del lanzamiento nacional. *(like many other Catalans, I was part of the national repossession)*

[…]

Companys: Pero fue una rebelión ¿no? *(But it was a rebellion, wasn't it?)*

Ramon: Teníamos que poner orden. *(We had to restore order)*

The Catalan language plays an important role in establishing a bond between Ramon and Companys. Later, as Ramon sympathises with Companys' experience of physical pain, he momentarily drops his role as a member of the regime and slips into Catalan. Companys replies in Catalan, and from then on there is a level of trust between the two men that was initially absent. Ramon takes his role as defence lawyer more seriously and retrieves secret documents from Companys' office. For this, his case notes are stolen and house sabotaged by the prosecution. Ramon and Companys are now portrayed as united against an unjust trial and this unity strengthened by their linguistic bond.

Throughout the film it is emphasised that the charges are brought against Companys-as-Catalonia, rather than Companys-as-individual. 'In judging me, they are judging a whole country' he replies to Ramon's story of being put on trial during the Civil War. This is

further confirmed in his last words before being shot, which were, 'per Catalunya' (for Catalonia).

The film's portrayal of this unlikely friendship between Ramon and Companys, in which Ramon is simply a Catalan on the 'wrong' side, trying to help Companys as best he can, creates a complex narrative of Catalonia under Franco. His sentence is given reluctantly, and the members of the regime present at the trial shift about and look uncomfortable as it is read out, ensuring that the portrayal of the individuals involved in the persecution of Companys is far from one-dimensional 'bad guys'. That *13 dies d'octubre* was made for television recalls Quintana's observation that filmmakers working in creative documentary formats in Barcelona in the 2000s considered the identity debate to have been absorbed by television and forms of 'typically Catalan cinema' in which the local element is so overemphasised that the cinema is inaccessible to audiences outside of Catalonia (Quintana, 2007, p. 144). *13 dies d'octubre*, screened on the TV3 and made available to watch on their website, is clearly addressing a Catalan audience. *El Coronel Macià,* in its final address to the Catalans, can also be read as such.

Together these films portray significant moments in Catalonia's twentieth-century history. *El Coronel Macià* was made and released in the context of the revision and renewal of the Catalan statute of autonomy in 2005 and 2006, which included provisions for increased autonomy. Its final message is one of hope reflecting that which, according to Catalan historical narrative, was inspired by Macià at the beginning of the Second Republic. *13 dies d'octubre* was made and released in a context of opposition from the Spanish state to measures for increased autonomy and portrays a resigned Companys sentenced to death after a drawn out trial at what would be the beginning of a long period of cultural and linguistic oppression. Aired just before an election that would decide the future of Catalonia because in it, parties were obliged to state their position on independence, the parallels are immediately obvious. The president, Artur Mas, had been the one to formally

pursue Catalan independence rather than federalism within Spain and so *13 dies d'octubre* functions, whether intentionally or not, as a reminder for viewers of the importance and historical weight that the upcoming election would carry. *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre* reclaim significant moments of Catalan history at equally significant moments for the future of Catalonia.

Narrating Resistance: *Salvador (Puig Antich)* (Manuel Huerga 2007) and *Fènix 1123* (Joel Joan and Sergi Lara 2012)

Salvador (Puig Antich) and *Fènix 11.23* are two biopics that focus on real civilian activists. *Salvador (Puig Antich)* is about the Catalan anarchist of the same name who was executed in 1974 after being found guilty of killing a Guardia Civil, and is based on the novel *Compte enrere: la història de Salvador Puig Antich* (Francesc Escribano, 2001). The use of the garrotte, a controversial execution method, 'gave rise to an enormous political mobilisation in Catalonia and through- out Europe, and acquired a crucial symbolic status in Catalan democratic culture, with Puig Antich as a myth of anti-Franco resistance' (Fernàndez, 2014, p. 85). *Fènix 11.23* is about Èric Bertran who, in 2004 at the age of 14, was accused of committing terrorist acts after demanding that a chain of supermarkets label their products in Catalan, in a real-life example of the aforementioned 'market forces of oppression'. Like the arrest of Patricia in *Ciutat Morta* being based on a misunderstanding of a text message, Èric is charged based on a misunderstanding of an email, and the title of his web page, l'Exercit del Fènix 11.23, inspired by Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, as well as '11' (for 11 September, Catalonia's national day) and 23 (for 23 April, the day of St. George, the patron saint of Catalonia). He was investigated by the *Audiencia Nacional*, the Spanish special tribunal court which deals with terrorism, and eventually pardoned. Evidently, *Fenix 11.23* is not a historical drama; at the time of writing Èric is still young and continues with his Catalan activism, now affiliated with the centre-right party *Convergènica Democràtica de Catalunya* (Democratic Convergence of

Catalonia) ‘CDC’. Like Joan, Francesc Macià, and Lluís Companys, Èric is portrayed as a Catalan hero, and endures suffering for his defence of the Catalan language, culture and identity. Salvador suffered for his defence of anarchist values and Leftist ideals, which were at the time in opposition to the regime. However, although Èric and Salvador are of different political persuasions, they are both portrayed as Catalan national heroes, which blurs Leftism and Catalanism into one narrative of resistance against Franco’s Spain, and the legacy of Franco’s Spain that remains today. Cascajosa Virino articulates how the movement for the recuperation of historical memory has brought to light the incomplete nature of the Transition to Democracy.

> This debate has been punctuated by the idea that the Transition was less than idyllic in its development and, in hindsight, allowed Francoism’s elite to continue wielding large amounts of power without being held accountable for what had occurred during the Dictatorship.
>
> (Cascajosa Virino, 2014, p. 194)

Salvador is interpreted by Martí-Olivella as ‘an important contribution to the recovery of Catalonia’s historical memory and its corollary of reclaiming [sic] that justice be served to those dishonoured by Francoism’ (Martí Olivella, 2011, p. 197). Those dishonoured by Francoism were Republicans, Leftists, and anyone who represented a challenge to the idea of a monocultural, monolingual Spain. However, someone who identified with Catalan, Basque, Galician, or any other ‘subnational’ identity could also be a supporter of the regime, as exemplified by Ramon in *13 dies d’octubre*. Here, it is argued that *Salvador (Puig Antich)* is an example of a film which narrates the resistance of the Left, but which because of Puig Antich’s history and Catalan identity, as well as that of the producer, also narrates the Catalan resistance with nostalgia.

The opening credits of *Salvador* show footage from various events during the 60s and 70s such as: the Vietnam War, the Cultural Revolution and Civil Rights Movement in the USA,

as well as a poster from Paris '68 and Alberto Korda's iconic image of Che Guevara (Korda, 1960), alongside NO-DO style footage and anti-Franco images from Spain. Thus, this tale of anti-Franco resistance is contextualised within a larger narrative of resistance that was manifesting in different sites around the world at the end of the 1960s. The credits give way to an intertitle that does not situate the narrative in terms of its relationship to fact, as do opening intertitles in *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre*, nor in relation to Spanish history, as does *Bruc; la llegenda*. Rather, they focus on Salvador's personality, and make no mention of his political ideals, establishing that this will be a character-led film.

> During the final years of the Franco Dictatorship there was an unprecedented rise in social conflict. The regime's oppression brought thousands of political prisoners and dozens of dead students and workers. This film is based on the true story of one of these youths who, in a time and place where everyone was on their knees, he dared to live without fear.

From the outset, Salvador (Daniel Brühl) is constructed as someone that everyone can relate to. Referred to as 'one of these youths', he could be anyone who resisted the regime during its final years. He becomes the plucky underdog rebelling against the system; removed of his political ideals and therefore more relatable as a character. Josep Anton Fernàndez explains the impact that this has.

> Historical truth is thus placed in the service of audience identification not so much with a historical character, but rather with a mythical figure, and, far from appealing to the spectators' knowledge in order to interpellate them to engage in a moral and political argument, this requires forcing the viewer into becoming a clean slate.
>
> (Fernàndez, 2014, p. 89)

The narrative framing device is Salvador telling his lawyer (Tristán Ulloa) the story of what happened, as he sits in prison. This introduces 'flashback mode', lasting fifty-two minutes and covering the years 1969-1973. In 'flashback mode', Salvador and his friends are depicted as naïve, young, and essentially innocent; giggling while they rob banks and

produce publications for the *Movimiento Ibérico de Liberación* ('Iberian Liberation Movement') 'MIL' that appear more like comic books than clandestine political publications. The flashback sections are tinted orange and accompanied by American rock music and fast editing, which creates a visual allure and retro 70s aesthetic that suggests a nostalgia for resistance. The flashback scenes are in stark contrast with the depiction of the diegetic present, in which long takes are tinted blue/grey and accompanied by a sorrowful score dominated by a slow melody on the cello. This emphasises the personal and emotional effects of repression and imprisonment of the second half. Furthermore, the screen time/real time ratio becomes increasingly unbalanced throughout the film, and the last twelve hours of Salvador's life are given the equivalent of almost two years of the flashback section. This increasing development toward a representation of 'realtime' create a sense of proximity or documentation to the protagonist and work to emphasise the emotion of his final twenty minutes.

The personalisation of history is written about by Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas as an inevitable aspect of films retrieving historical figures, because the opposition was excluded from the public domain and 'after the lifting of censorship the articulation of that experience continued to bear the influence of those restricted codes […of] metaphor, symbolism and allusion'(Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 39). In *Salvador*, the final goodbyes, which last twenty-two minutes in themselves, are drawn out and emotionalised so much that this section begins to resemble a TV melodrama. After Salvador's drawn out execution the prison guard Jesús (Leonardo Sbaraglia), who had struck up an unlikely friendship with him, breaks down in tears. His distress suggests that even characters symbolic of the regime opposed the method of execution. Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas write that in distancing the past, 'political militancy is often depicted as naïve and immature, or that emphasis is placed on the personal emotional and psychological effects of repression and imprisonment, rather than on the analysis of

political and ideological alliances', with the 'denunciation of social injustice in competition with the visual allure of period settings and costumes and glossy surface of high-quality production values' (Jordan and Morgan-Tamosunas, 1998, p. 55). This is exactly what happens in *Salvador*, as pointed out by Fernàndez who argues that, 'the aim to turn Puig Antich's execution into a generational experience that elicits the identification of today's audiences, not only empties Puig Antich of any political content, but makes moral reflection on political violence impossible'(Fernàndez, 2014, p. 86).

However, various devices link *Salvador (Puig Antich)* to the present, creating a novel version of history. Most notably, Lluis Llach was the director of music. Llach is a prominent Catalanist whose songs often centre around the 'Left' and 'catalanista' sides of the 'Right/Left-españolista/catalanista' dichotomies. He took centre stage at the 'Concert per la llibertat' ('Concert for freedom') on the 29th June 2013; a six-hour concert to show support for Catalan independence. He is also one of the 'independent' members of the pro-independence '*Junts pel sí'* ('Together for the yes vote') coalition party that entered the *Generalitat* in January 2016. The title track is '*I si canto trist'* ('And if I'm singing sadly'), a song he first wrote in 1974 as a tribute to Puig Antich. The version used in this film begins acoustic as the original does, but is modernised as the second verse starts through the introduction of electronic instruments. This arguably creates a temporal link between the past and the present and provokes similarities to be drawn in terms of the cultural and linguistic repression experienced. 'Connecting the past with the present' was an aim of Huerga's, as was establishing Puig Antich as a symbol of a generation of anti-Franco resistance (Camí-Vela and Huerga, 2008, p. 244; Fernàndez, 2014, p. 89).

The film was produced by Jaume Roures, CEO of *MediaPro*, who was a member of the *Liga Communista Revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Communist League), a Communist party founded in Catalonia in the 1970s. Roures' involvement as producer jeopardises the director's claims that *Salvador (Puig Antich)* is Catalan only 'because it is produced in

Catalonia by a Catalan producer […and that …] Salvador was not a nationalist [and] if there is anything in opposition to nationalism it is anarchism. This is not a film to make victims of the Catalans' (Camí-Vela and Huerga, 2008, p. 195). Roures was also a self-proclaimed Catalanist, which goes some way towards both the nostalgic aesthetic and the blurring of leftism and Catalanism into one narrative of resistance. He has also stated that he earns money not to live well, but to 'carry out his ideas' (Vertele, 2009).

Obviously, Roures' intentions cannot be proved, but he did also coproduce *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, and produces the films of Isabel Coixet, a Catalan-born director who usually works outside of the region. The choice of Daniel Brühl to play Puig Antich, a German/Catalan actor with a Europe-wide appeal after starring in the successful *Goodbye Lenin!* (Wolfgang Becker, 2003) and *Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei* (*The Edukators*) (Weingartner, 2004) is acknowledged as a commercial move, because 'he helps to sell the film to an international market' (Camí-Vela and Huerga, 2008, p. 194; Ugalde, 2015, p. 319). However, there is also a secondary, cultural interest related to the creation and maintenance of identity. Rosalind Galt points out that 'by popularising the historical in terms of nostalgia and mise-en-scène, the heritage film has opened up a space within European film culture, not only for increased American and domestic box office, but also for a renewed circulation of national identities' (Galt, 2006, p. 7). *Salvador (Puig Antich)* can therefore be understood as a film which repackages the narrative of Leftist-Catalanist anti-Franco resistance during the late Dictatorship for an international audience, and through the international nature of Leftism, makes the Catalan aspect more accessible.

However, ex-members of the MIL denounced the film for exploiting the life and death of Salvador the anti-capitalist for capitalist purposes, as well as trivialising the MIL, neglecting the socio-historical facts which brought about its beginnings, and representing Salvador and the MIL as having bourgeois lifestyles (MIL, 2006). Criticised by the Left for failing to narrate the resistance of the Left, this leaves only the narrative of Catalan

resistance. Made in the context of a socialist tripartite government in Catalonia, a Socialist government in Spain, the renewal of the Catalan statute of Autonomy (before the changes were reversed), and of multiple sources of funding for Catalan and Catalan-language film, *Salvador (Puig Antich)* can also be seen to reveals a nostalgia for resistance, and having something to resist.

Fènix 11.23 takes a much more direct approach to placing the protagonist within his social context and begins with an intertitle reading 'This story is real'. Accompanying the final credits for the main actors is footage of the actors rehearsing alongside footage of the people whom the actors are playing. Physical resemblances are very close, and eventually the actors are faded out to show clips of the real Èric being interviewed after his ordeal with the *Audiencia Nacional*. *Fènix 11.23* was released in 2012, two years after *Bruc*, and at the beginning of the political Catalan independence process. It narrates the ordeal faced by Èric Bertran, who already had written a book about these events in 2006 *Èric i l'Exèrcit del Fènix. Acusat de voler viure en català* ('Èric and the Army of the Phoenix. Accused of wanting to live in Catalan') (Bertran, 2006). There had also already been a documentary made about his story, *Èric and the Army of the Phoenix*, which is available on Bertran's YouTube channel and the first part of which has over one million views (Mató, 2005)

The first twenty minutes of the film introduce Eric as a young pro-independence Catalan living in a small town, sneaking off to Barcelona to take photos of protests, and running his website, and being bullied for his ideology. This all takes place in sunny scenery, with a light accompanying score. We see him write an email to an anonymous supermarket demanding that they label their products in Catalan, and with his friends he plans to 'bombard' their email inbox with emails if they do not begin to do so. In another scene he is taunted in a chat room, and to try and intimidate the bully's he mentions 'his friends in ETA'. The mentions of 'bombarding' and 'ETA' are used in the charges brought against him as proof of terrorism. We are introduced to the Capitan of the Guardia Civil,

Cardeñosa (Roberto Álamo), and the Judge (Ana Álvarez Wagener) who will prosecute him in Madrid. They are concerned and send a team to raid his house. As he gives his statement the next day in the dilapidated old station, it is clear that the Guardia Civil and the Judge view his acts as a threat, and take it as a personal offense. As the investigation goes on, relations between Èric and his father Ferran (Àlex Casanovas) become strained. Ferran loses his job because of the case, and it is not until they are on the way to the supreme Court in Madrid, that their relationship improves. After the trial, the problem becomes a political one rather than a legal one because of the dialogue below, which was taken verbatim from the trial.

Grand Judge: Eres español, te guste o no te guste ¿verdad que eres español? *(You are Spanish whether you like it or not. Is it not true that you are Spanish?)*

Èric: **Silent*

Grand Judge: Èric te estoy haciendo una pregunta y quiero que me respondas. ¿Verdad que eres español? Di. ¿Eres español? *(Èric I am asking you a question I want you to answer me. Is it not true that you are Spanish? Answer me. Are you Spanish?).*

Èric: Jo soc el que soc *(I am what I am).*

Grand Judge: Di que eres español o te encierro *(Say you are Spanish or I'll lock you up).*

Lawyer: Señora fiscal… *(Your honour…)*

Grand Judge: Señor letrado por favor. Èric por última vez, di que eres español. *(Would the defence refrain from interruption? Èric, for the last time; say you are Spanish).*

Èric: **Silent*

Grand Judge: Muy bien Eric, tu decides. *(Very well, you decide).*

Èric gains the support of the public, as well as politicians from *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (Republican Left of Catalonia) and *Inciativa per Catalunya verd* (Initiative for a Green Catalonia). Eventually, Èric is cleared, as the judge is forced to drop charges. A character with whom the audience identify is necessary for the creation of a successful narrative fiction film. Like in *Salvador (Puig Antich),* the mode of filmmaking used to portray Èric's story takes a highly personalised and dramatised approach. The distinction between good and bad characters in *Fènix 11.23* is set up mostly through the use of lighting and score, which is personalised to each character. Cardeñosa is introduced as sinister and threatening through backlighting and a low angle shot of him from behind, with sinister music reaching a crescendo as he turns to face the camera. On the other hand, Èric's lawyer, mother and love interest are mostly portrayed in daylight, with light background score. Furthermore, the courtroom scene is pre-empted by a similar interaction between Èric and the school bully earlier in the film, ensuring that parallels are drawn between judge and bully. The bully wears a T-shirt with a bull on it (a symbol of Spanish culture), and steals Èric's 'Catalonia is not Spain' T-shirt.

Bully 1: Te la tornaré amb una condició: digues que ets espanyol. *(I will give it back to you on one condition: say you are Spanish).*

Èric: Una puta merda dic 'espanyol'. *(Like shit am I saying that).*

Bully 1: Només has de dir que ets espanyol. *(All you have to do is say that you are Spanish).*

Bully 2: Repite conmigo 'yo soy español'. *(Repeat after me, 'I am Spanish').*

Èric: Que no ho diré! *(I will not say it!)*

As discussed in chapter two, Joel Joan is former president of the Catalan Film Academy and publicly pro-independence. Despite some effort to complicate the characters of Èric

and his father, who is Catalan but ostracised by the family until he supports his son, there is a clear distinction between good and bad characters. Along with the parallel drawn between the judge and the Bully, it would seem that perhaps the film is overdramatised. However, Joel Joan and Sergi Lara explained at a directors Q&A following the screening that they had to tone down the real events so that an international audience would believe the story (Joan and Lara, 2013). They gave the example of reducing the size of the anti-terrorist team from the Guardia Civil who raided Èric's house, because they didn't think anyone would believe that thirty agents would have been sent from Madrid just for a little boy (Joan and Lara, 2013). As such, there is a three-way tension in this film between telling Èric's story to an international audience, the absurdness of the true events, and the desire for this film to play a part in the ongoing narrative of linguistic tension in Catalonia leading to a solumn, rather than absurd, portrayal. This complexity perhaps functions as a microcosmic example of the tensions that Catalan films explicitly about Catalan issues face when trying to reach audeinces outside of Catalonia.

Fènix 11.23 narrates contemporary resistance to the repression of Catalan culture, even though the story and the characters appear to belong more to the Franco Dictatorship. This story of resistance to state oppression in contemporary time recalls *Ciutat morta*, discussed in chapter four. *Fènix 11.23* is a biopic, rather than a mixed mode documentary, but both films incorporate aspects of other genres. *Ciutat morta* borrows from noir, and *Fènix 11.23* borrows from the thriller genre, reflecting Cascajosa's observation that the vestiges of Francoism live on in positions of power. Just as *Salvador (Puig Antich)* is linked to the present through song, *Fènix 11.23* is linked to the past. The rolling credits are accompanied by the song '*Que volen aquesta gent'* ('What do these people want?') by Maria del Mar Bonet (del Mar Bonet, 1968). The song was adapted from a poem written by Luis Serrahima in 1968 as a response to police violence, and is written from the point of view of a mother whose son is being bothered by the police, which leads to his suicide. Parallels

are drawn then, with the plot of *Fènix 11.23.* Although Èric does not commit suicide, he is constantly bothered by the police for a misinterpretation of his action based on institutional prejudice against Catalans. Given that the poem and song were written in response to police violence against two young left-wing Madrileños in 1968, this can be seen as another example of blurring the lines between 'left-wing' and 'Catalan' in the narrative of resistance.

Maria del Mar Bonet, Luís Serrahima and Lluís Llach were part of *La nova cançó* ('The New Song') movement, which is acknowledged as having played an important role in the creation of a collective identity among Catalan-speaking regions of Spain, France, and Sardinia (Alguer) at the end of the Dictatorship. Songs were often an expression of resistance against the Dictatorship's repression of Catalan language and culture and were also adopted by the Spanish Left more generally (Pallach, 2000, pp. 362–382). Serrahima was a key figure as he wrote lyrics for singers associated the movement, and it was he who published '*Ens calen cançons d'ara'* ('We need songs of our time'), which was taken as a manifesto for the movement in the magazine *Germinabit* (Serrahima i Villavecchia, 1959). The movement disbanded a little toward the end of the Dictatorship as singers of the main group associated with the movement, *Els setze jutges* (The Sixteen Judges), began to follow solo careers, and others began to sing in Spanish. However, some members are still active in Catalan music and culture and their songs blur Catalanism and Spanish Leftism that is evident in both films.

In summary, both *Salvador (Puig Antich)* and *Fènix 11.23* can be understood on one level as tools for Catalan nation building around the articulation of the myth of Catalonia as victim of Spain. This creates or reminds viewers of wounds around which to collectively grieve, and therefore bond which, as Monserrat Guibernau writes, 'strengthens a sense of common identity among those who belong to the nation [that endured this repression] even if it lacks a state of its own' (Guibernau, 2007, pp. 11, 20). These films represent attempts

to simplify articulations on Catalan identity as locked into a binary dichotomy with the Spanish state. This is unlike the articulation of the inherent multiculturalism of Catalan identity in *Bruc*, which provides an alternative language version for viewers who identify as Spanish. It is also unlike the complexities of Catalanism as a political ideal in *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre*, or the complication of the 'Catalonia as victim and benefactor of Spain' narrative in *Pa negre.* The use of music in both *Salvador (Puig Antich)* and *Fènix 11.23* represent an ideology of resistance through culture that recalls *La nova cançó*. However, this time the vehicle of expression is not music, but New Catalan Cinema.

Complicating the Catalan Historical Narrative: *Pa negre* (Agustí Villaronga 2010)

In the opening scene of *Pa negre*, we see Culet (Miquel Borràs) and his father Dionís (Andrés Herrera) travelling by wagon through the forest. A hooded figure violently kills Dionís as Culet stares out from inside the wagon, unbeknown to the attacker. In a shot reminiscent of *Bruc; la llegenda* the next shot is of blue skies, and the camera pans down to reveal a view from the top of Montserrat. The attacker wheels the wagon and the blindfolded horse to the edge. With a blow to the horse's face, the horse, the wagon, Díonis, and Culet plummet down the side of Montserrat. Amago writes that, 'the crushing blows to the head that open the film work temporarily to traumatise a spectator who cannot help but wince and brace him or herself for more brutality' (Amago, 2013, p. 113). That this violence should take place on Montserrat suggests that the trauma to follow will be distinctly Catalan.

The opening scene may resemble a violent historical thriller, but the story morphs into a post-war historical drama set during rural Catalonia; when poverty and hunger characterised the lives of former Republicans. The majority of violence that follows is metaphorical, or imagined, by Andreu. The major blow is that dealt to the narrative of Catalan post-war resistance; a narrative around which Catalan national identity is

constructed. The protagonist of this film is the young Andreu (Francesc Colomer), from a family on the losing side of the Civil War living in poverty and surviving day to day. He discovers his friend Culet dying on the forest floor after the cliff accident. Culet's last word is 'Pitorliua', the name of a bird-man said to haunt a cave in the forest. This is where Andreu's investigation begins. He wants to know who Pitorliua really is or was, and who killed Culet and his father Dionís (Andrés Herrera), who was a friend and business partner of Andreu's own father, Farriol (Roger Casamajor). We identify with Andreu from the first moment, as it is through Andreu's discoveries that we find out more about the adults in the film and ultimately that the distinction between Republican and Nationalist, and winners and losers, are not so clear-cut as the children in the film initially imagine.

> The film's narrative and visual structures, which foreground the processes of doing historical work – of making sense of a forgotten past - [that] reflect an archeological impulse operating within contemporary Spanish culture that has paid increasing attention to the ethical and aesthetic potential of historical inquiry in the democratic present.
>
> (Amago, 2013, p. 100).

Nor, as Andreu discovers, are distinctions between childhood and adulthood, sickness and health, or good and bad. Thus, as Andreu matures and realises his world is more complex than he imagined, so do narratives of Catalan history, identity and resistance. Through Andreu's piecing together of half-understood information, he invents the truth behind Pitorliua in a dream sequence revealing that Farriol and Dionís were responsible for castrating and killing Pitorliua (Joan Carles Suau), who was actually a close friend of Andreu's mother Florència (Nora Navas), and Mrs. Manubens' (Mercè Aránega) brother's lover. As is explored by Sarah Wright, his historical memory is actually a prosthetic memory, and can thus be read as a metaphor for the movement for historical memory, which was led by a generation that does not have living memory of the Civil War or immediate post-war period (Wright, 2013). Amago writes that this scene works as 'a reminder that historical inquiry can disturb cozy notions of narrative resistance' (Amago,

2013, p. 109). Andreu's reaction to this traumatic knowledge of his father's actions turns him into a 'bird-killer', and he smashes up his father's aviary, killing the birds he kept there and used to teach Andreu about freedom of thought.

As a landowner, Mrs Manubens is a member of the Catalan bourgeoisie, and the poverty of the rural populations in post-war Catalonia allows her to manipulate them. Firstly, she pays Farriol and Dionís to scare her brother out of town, then she pays Farriol to kill Dionís, before buying Farriol's silence in exchange for his son. She is childless, and has no heir. At the end of the film Andreu is traumatised by his knowledge of the acts committed by his father, the apparent complicity of his mother, the apathy of his community, and the tendency of adults to lie about the past. In fact, the only adults to speak the truth are Pauleta (Laia Marull) and Núria (Marina Comas) who are marked as crazy because of the wrongs they have suffered, Àvia (Elisa Crehuet) who is old, and his mother Florència, also speak truths, but only after Andreu already knows. These characters are all female, from the losing side, and in the case of Pauleta, Núria and Àvia, age and madness further distance them from the males on the winning side who would write history. Clearly, there are some issues regarding gender and historical memory here, but most relevant to this analysis is that the narrative of this story is told by women and children, who Farriol states 'didn't do anything' in reference to the war.

Andreu rejects his Republican family to have his education paid for by Mrs. Manubens and thus, switches sides from Left to Right. The spectator identifies with Andreu and those who have told him the truth, so the discovery that Mrs. Manubens, who manipulates them all for her own gain, is the one that Andreu turns to in order to escape his family and village creates a metaphorical violence. Having identified with Andreu as being from a Republican Catalan family, and lulled into a false sense of security through familiar tropes of the child protagonist, familiar setting and mode of address for a film that does something to appease the losing side, the shock of the audience's on-screen counterpart

switching sides and thus complicating the portrayal of the losing side provokes reflection upon the fact that narratives of Catalan national resistance are not as simple as they appear. Andreu's mother comes to visit him at his new school, paid for by Mrs. Manubens. She reveals that his father agreed not to implicate Mrs. Manubens in his crimes whilst on trial, as long as she would look after Andreu. By learning about the past and then disowning his family based on the knowledge gained, Andreu believed he had gained agency and freedom, but upon learning that his destiny was always to end up with the Manubens, this illusion is shattered. After all, the birds he killed in his father's aviary were caged, and therefore false symbols of freedom. This qualifies Amago's observation that 'if we are going to expose the skeletons in Catalonia's historical closet, we must be prepared for some nasty surprises' (Amago, 2013, p. 110).

Like *13 dies d'octubre*, *Pa negre* represents a more complicated narrative of Catalan resistance than *Salvador (Puig Antich)* and *Fènix 11.23*. All of the films discussed in this chapter found domestic commercial success, but *Pa negre* also managed to find critical Spanish and international success. Screening in cinemas for eight months, sweeping awards at the *Gaudís* and *Goyas,* and being chosen as Spain's candidate for 'best foreign language film' at the 2012 Oscar awards, it was seen by many as a film that stands for the coming-of-age of Catalan cinema (Catalan News Agency, 2011). Along with the fact that its finance, technical and artistic talent are mostly Catalan, this is one of the least complicated examples of Catalan national cinema that circulates at an international level. Producer Isona Passola elaborates in an interview with the Observatory of Audiovisual Production when she says that *Pa negre* has shown that, 'there is a public, and that public identifies with a language, certain themes, and feel that the film is theirs, they feel invited, and this translates into two million six hundred thousand Euros takings, seventy per cent of which are from Catalan-speaking territories' (Jiménez, 2011). These Catalan-speaking territories are outside of the domestic audience category, but the content and language of

the film demonstrate this wider public for Catalan-language films within the Catalan Communicative Space discussed in chapter two. However, in highlighting that the audience to whom this film 'belongs' is located in the Catalan-speaking territories, Passola frames *Pa negre* as exemplary of the possibilities for cinema in the 'Catalan Communicative Space', which, as already explored in chapter two, is 'still a strategic objective', especially in relation to cinema.

Amago writes that the film is recognisably Catalan because 'Villaronga's choices in casting, location, source text, story, language and *mise-en-scène* clearly aspire to an expression of *catalanitat*, whilst adhering to a mode of address that recalls heritage films in other European cinemas' (Amago, 2013, p. 111). The fact that in *Pa negre* the Franco regime and notions of Spain or Madrid function only as a backdrop means that the narration of Catalan-Spanish relations during this time does not interfere with what is an entirely Catalan narrative. Ironically, this allows *Pa negre* to operate on the international stage as a Spanish film. As in *Bruc, la llegenda*, the absence of Spain allows *Pa negre* to be read as Spanish. The rural post-war setting and the complication of dichotomies between Republicans and Nationalists as well as rich and poor, are relevant to the historical experience in the rest of Spain, and can be read independently of the specifically Catalan setting. If the narrative had framed the complicated Catalan resistance in relation to Spain, then the possibility for dual readings might not be so easy. As Spain's entry for best foreign language film at the Oscars it demonstrates the move towards an understanding of Spanish cinema as a cinema of cinemas, as explored in the literature review.

However, *Pa negre* can also be read as a global film. Amago writes that its 'interest as a cultural text lies in the ways in which it negotiates the apparently contradictory forces between the local and the global economic and political pressures' and that through its dual mode of address it 'has invited a broader national or transnational audience to participate in

a more culturally specific discourse' (Amago, 2013, p. 111). Directed by auteur filmmaker Agustí Villaronga, filmed with high production values in 'nostalgia mode', featuring familiar faces from film and television, and primarily concerned with recovering and screening the (Catalan national) past for a domestic and international audience, *Pa negre* could therefore easily be discussed in relation to concepts of the heritage film and national cinema.

> The heritage film is often associated with craftsmanship, with competent yet unexciting filmmaking. However, its complex links with issues of history and representation, its continuous popularity and its relevance for the study of the national cinemas warrant its critical interest; as we shall see, its relation with the past – as well as with its own generic past – is anything but static.
>
> (Vidal, 2012, p. 9).

Thematically *Pa negre* fits into tropes of Spanish cinema whilst also articulating a Catalan specificity to a Catalan, Spanish and global audience through its engagement with a mode of filmmaking that is accessible for international audiences. Aesthetically it represents the genre-hybrid, multilingual, interstitial character that critics assign to the New Catalan Cinema whilst also recalling the Barcelona School through its director, and Catalan literary traditions through it being an adaptation of Teixidor's novels. In its critical and commercial success it represents a model of filmmaking that conveys cultural specificity whilst also using the codes and conventions that international audiences recognise as signaling heritage, and therefore recogniseably national, cinema.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored six genre films of the New Catalan Cinema to deal with theme of Catalan history, historical narrative and identity in relation to the context in which they were made. They can all therefore be understood as contributing to the construction of historical memory, 'a form of social memory in which a group constructs a selective representation of its own imagined past' (Boyd, 2008, p. 134). In these films, the Catalan national past is represented as having its roots in legend and the land in *Bruc; la llegenda,*

which works to naturalise the Catalan national identity as multilingual and cross-border through the use of landscape, language and myth. It is a co-production and was filmed multiple times in different languages, although even in those versions where Catalan does not appear, the narrative remains, because of the hero's link to the mountain of Montserrat, a symbol of Catalan identity. In *Bruc; la llegenda*, the narrative of Catalonia as victim and redeemer of Spain is set up because the hero, Joan, is persecuted for saving his multilingual Catalonia and Spain from France, the monolingual and centralised nation state. The existence of multiple language versions reflects the context in which it was made, whereby in order to reach a wider audience and recoup costs, the number of copies for the Castilian-dubbed version far exceeded the original version and the alternative Spanish/French version. It had a budget of $7.9 million, and was therefore one of the largest budget Catalan films of 2009 (*Variety*, 2009, p. A10) It was also the twentieth highest-grossing Spanish film of 2010 at the Spanish box office, suggesting commercial success in Spain (Brunet, 2011). The use of landscape allowed the narrative of Catalan historical identity to permeate all versions, as in the first cinematic production of this legend, *El tambor de Bruch.* In the dubbed version, the lines repeated by translator characters create a criticism of the dominance of Castilian-dubbed films in the Spanish market; the redundancy of their lines reflecting the redundancy of the idea that Spain is monolingual. As such, it is a historical action film which speaks more about the context in which it was made than the historical setting.

Whereas *Bruc; la llegenda* can be seen to naturalise the Catalan identity, *El coronel Macià* and *13 dies d'octubre* can be understood to politicise it. As biopics of the two Catalan presidents during the Second Republic, they also reclaim a narrative of Catalan political history in the context of the recuperation of historical memory and the recuperation of democratic memory. They too, are multilingual films, but their multilingualism is down to linguistic verisimilitude; Catalan characters speaking in Catalan, and characters associated

with the regime speaking in Spanish. Or at least, in the case of *13 dies d'octubre*, Catalan characters associated with the regime speaking in Spanish until a friendship is struck up. Just as Forn made *Company, procés a Catalunya* in the context of the debates surrounding the Catalan statute of autonomy in 1979, which would see Catalonia formally gain increased autonomy from Spain, he made *El coronel Macià* in the context of this being amended to include measures for increased autonomy in 2005. The tone of the film is jubilant, focuses on the international attention that Macià and his cause attracted in 1932, and through incorporating archive material in the final scene, can be understood to address the Catalan audience of 2006, reminding them of a moment of glory in their historical narrative of resistance. *13 dies d'octubre* was made after the socialist, pluralist Spain in which the Statute of Autonomy had been rewritten was over. Economic crisis, changes in both governments and a reversal of the measures for increased autonomy and nationhood in the new Statute of Autonomy, led to years of frustrated attempts by the Catalan government to enter dialogue with Spanish central government. The subject of *13 dies d'octubre* is a less jubilant moment in the Catalan historical narrative; the execution of Companys and the beginning of the Franco Dictatorship. However, made in 2014 after the simplified narratives of national resistance had were being challenged as in *Pa negre*, the portrayal of the regime is not overly simplified, taking into account that many Catalans also formed part of this regime. Despite this, the Catalan language does suggest an inherent bond between the two unlikely friends, a bond that transcends political difference.

Salvador (Puig Antich) and *Fènix 11.23* can be understood as two films that personalise narratives of Catalan history and resistance. The use of *la nova cançó* links the cultural resistance of the late 1960s to that of the present in both films, and contributes to their blurring of Leftist and Catalanist resistance, which angered the Left in the case of *Salvador (Puig Antich)*. However, in the context of the recuperation of historical memory, *Salvador (Puig Antich) was* generally viewed as an important film, and was a huge success at the

box office. Framing the story within the context of other narratives of resistance taking place around the world at the time, and choosing Daniel Brühl for the lead role reflects a desire to internationalise both the narrative, and Catalan cinema. Produced by Jaume Roures at Mediapro, one of the largest audio-visual conglomerates in Spain, this production was one of the highlights of 2007, along with *El orfanato*. The involvement of Roures and the nostalgic mode in which much of it is filmed suggest a nostalgia for resistance at a time when Spain and Catalonia were politically in sync during the mid-2000s. The use of score, lighting and *mise en scène* creates a less complex portrayal of good and bad characters though, as in *Fènix 11.23*, which was directed by another Catalanist, and major name in Catalan cinema for his involvement in founding the Catalan Academy of Cinema, Joel Joan.

Pa negre was also produced by someone who would later become director of the Catalan Academy of Cinema, Isona Passola. It was also a very profitable film, and achieved a milestone for Catalan cinema, and Catalan-language cinema, by becoming Spain's first Catalan-language entry for the Oscar Awards in 2012. It was not nominated, but through this, achieved international recognition, causing many to view it as New Catalan Cinema's success story. Catalan genre co-productions in the English language may often circulate internationally, as do a number of avant-garde films, but *Pa negre* is identifiably Catalan, given the language and subject matter; which presents a much more complex representation of the narrative of Catalan post-war resistance, closing the door on the historical inquiry that characterised much of the new millennium in the form of the recuperation of historical memory.

Chapter Six

Cultural Specificity and Global Appeal in Catalan Horror Cinema

So far, this thesis has characterised the development of New Catalan Cinema as follows; a wave of creative documentaries around the millennium which developed an aesthetic that would become characteristic of the period that were followed by policy changes at Spanish and Catalan levels. These changes led to increased genre production and co-productions occurring in parallel with further aesthetic development in documentary, as well as ideas of Barcelonan cinema and an identifiably Catalan cinema circulating internationally. Furthermore, just as with the boom in documentary, the revival of horror production is connected to international trends and developments in filmmaking. As Hutchings observes, 'after the mid-1980s, European (including, if you wish, British) horror production dwindles to virtually nothing before returning, in its second period, at around the turn of the millennium' (Hutchings, 2016, p. 4). A significant moment for the beginning of this wave in Catalonia and Spain is when American producer Brian Yuzna and Filmax executive Julio Fernández forged the 'Fantastic Factory' label in 1998. In fact, Nicholas Schlegel cites Fantastic Factory as 'the first major development for reviving [Spanish] horror as a more viable genre for production' because it 'boosted internal consistency and employed new Spanish talent in front of and behind the camera, and was a successful international distributor' (Schlegel, 2015, p. 170). At Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival in 1998, when he and Yuzna met, Fernández stated that the aim was to 'prove that world class products of interest to everyone can be made in Barcelona', adding that 'we want that one day the history of cinema will explain that Spain, Catalonia, Europe, have contributed to the revolution of the fantastic genre' (Comas, 2010, p. 110; 318). His reference to 'Spain, Catalonia, and Europe' introduces the relevance of horror to the discussion of New Catalan

Cinema. Whereas in chapter four ideas of *cinema Barceloní* were explored in relation to documentary and in chapter five ideas of *cinema català* in relation to historical fiction, this chapter explores ideas of catalan cinema as simultaneously or variably local, national and global with reference to the horror genre. Thus, rather than examining the regional or national, it seeks to examine the presence of both within a global mode of filmmaking, expanding, rather than narrowing, the concept of New Catalan Cinema to be at once Barceloní, Catalan, Spanish and Global.

Just as Chanan refers to films that are key to understanding New Catalan Cinema such as *Monos Como Becky* and *En Construcción* when discussing the global resurgence in documentary filmmaking, Stephen Prince refers to Fantastic Factory when discussing the global resurgence of the horror film. He writes that, 'Stuart Gordon, of *Re-animator* fame, returned in 2002 with *Dagon,* another H.P Lovecraft adaptation […] These lurid instances of the genre coexist with more highbrow productions such as *The Others* (2001) and *Signs* (2002)' (Prince, 2004, p. 1). Thus, accepting and analysing the position of New Catalan Cinema in a global context of renewal in film practice, and what this means for the films themselves, is reasonable, given that Barcelona has already been portrayed as a key centre of production for both documentary and horror film production.

Andrew Willis writes that Fantastic Factory productions were 'clearly aimed to sit among other low-mid budget American horror films without drawing attention to their production roots, attracting cinema goers and more likely, DVD renters, through generic elements rather than their national origins' (Willis, 2008, p. 32). This suggests that cultural specificity and place are less pronounced in horror than documentary within the umbrella of New Catalan Cinema. The English-language and unidentifiable/international locations of *Faust*: *Love of the Damned* (Brian Yuzna, 2000) and *Arachnid* (Jack Sholder, 2001), both directed by Americans, are an example of this. The films were in the English language, and in the words of Àngel Comas, populated mostly by 'second category Anglo-

Saxon actors' (Comas, 2010, p. 60). Despite this, Comas also states that 'effects were guaranteed by the participation of Screaming Mad George, and that global distribution by Miramax [as well as language and cast] meant that international sales were much higher than domestic sales' (Comas, 2010, p. 60). The contrast of international audience with a small national audience mirrors the observations about the exhibtion and reception of documentary films discussed in chapter three. However, as chapter four explored, those films with explicitly local or topical subject matter such as *En Construcción* or *Ciutat Morta* reached a wider number of spectators within the Catalan domestic audience. Indeed, a similar progression toward increased cultural specificity throughout the decade can be seen in the development of horror films and within the *[·REC]* series itself.

Antonio Lázaro-Reboll points out that, *Dagon, la secta del mar* (Stuart Gordon, 2001) 'introduces more identifiably 'Spanish' elements', suggesting a local (Spanish) aesthetic born out of a global context (Lázaro-Reboll, 2012, p. 223). Then,'Fantastic Discovery', the branch of Fantastic Factory devoted to finding new talent, led to new Spanish directors Jaume Balagueró, Paco Plaza and Luis de la Madrid directing *Darkness* (2002), *Romasanta; la caza de la bestia* (2004) and *La monja* (2005) respectively. *Romasanta* is arguably the Fantastic Factory film that is most easily located in Spain, as although the dialogue is in English it is based on a Galician legend of a werewolf, perhaps in tribute to Paul Naschy (Jacinto Molina Álvarez), the werewolf of the international Spanish horror of the 60s and 70s. Fantastic Factory was not the beginning of a return to culturally specific horror filmmaking in Spain as it was preceded by films such as *Tesis* (Amenábar) and *El día de la Bestia* (Álex de la Iglésia). However, the 1990s and 2000s saw two generations of horror auteurs in Spain who have been collectively dubbed 'the Terror Group'(Belluco, 2008). Amenábar, de la Iglésia and Nacho Cerdà were joined by Guillem Morales, JA Bayona, Jaume Balagueró, Paco Plaza, and Juan Carlos Fresnadillo making more obviously global films with increasing Spanish specificity from the late 1990s onwards.

Although Morales, Bayona, Balagueró, Cerdà, and Plaza often work in Barcelona and all of the terror group are representative of Spanish Horror, it is their genre, rather than nation or region, is where they feel they belong. As Bayona states, 'I feel more like I'm from Sitges [International Fantastic Film Festival] rather than being Spanish or Catalan' (Belluco, 2008). After *El orfanato* Bayona moved out of the horror sub-genre but has remained within the macro-genre of 'fantasy'. He went on to direct the (English-language) film, *Lo impossible* (The Impossible) (2012), the fifth 'most-seen' film in Europe in 2013, before he moved on to direct two episodes of the Sky Atlantic TV series *Penny Dreadful*. Most recently, he has directed an (English-Language) adaptation of the Patrick Ness novel, *A Monster Calls* (*Un Monstruo viene a verme*) (2016); a Spanish (Catalan), UK, USA co-production shot in the North of England with a cast and crew reflecting the transnational production credits. In *The Terror Group* Morales states that using fantasy to tell stories allows directors to decontextualise themselves form the national context of Spain, and Fresnadillo echoes that sentiment, saying that horror is a way to escape this country, because Spanish audiences don't tend to watch Spanish films. Tellingly, Fresnadillo's most well-known film is *28 weeks later* (Fresnadillo, 2007), the sequel to Danny Boyle's *28 days later* (Boyle, 2002), which occupies second place in Screen Rant's '14 best horror sequels', after *Evil Dead 2* (Sam Raimi 1989) (Striga, 2016).

Despite developing in different directions, the 'terror group' share common influences; Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Jack Clayton, Sam Raimi, Dario Argento, Brian de Palma, and Stanley Kubrick among others. Influences closer to home include Narcisco 'Chicho' Ibáñez Serrador, and for the younger filmmakers; Álex de la Iglesia and Alejandro Amenábar, especially *El día de la bestia* (de la Iglesia, 1992) and *Tesis* (Amenábar, 1996). The influences and practices of these filmmakers are therefore rooted in international exchange, cult cinema, and the nationally specific roots of their genre. This is not unlike other horror directors during the genre's revival.

> […] the kind of European horror that emerges during the contemporary period largely comes out of the same internationalised fan-based culture that much of Eurohorror criticism comes out of as well. These film-makers, be they Spanish, French or British, often self-identify as horror fans, have been influenced by the same internationally eclectic band of older cult horror films, and define their own work in relation to this material.
>
> (Hutchings, 2016, p. 5)

Hutchings also observes that unlike other genres such as the western, 'a horror film can take place anywhere (any town, country planet), in any historical period (past, present, future)' and that, 'in the face of such eclecticism, critics have otherwise become preoccupied instead with what might be termed horror's inner workings, its themes and underlying structures as well as its social function, and have used this as a basis for genre definition' (Hutchings, 2004, p. 6). It is these 'inner workings' that are often perceived to facilitate the international appeal of horror to base human emotions like fear. Stephen Prince writes that 'like other film genres, horror resonates with social and cultural meanings […] but, unlike other genres, horror also goes deeper, to explore the fundamental questions about the nature of human existence, questions that, in some profound ways, go beyond culture and society as these are organised in any given period or form' (Prince, 2004, p. 2). The preoccupation with horror's inner workings and questions of base emotion that go beyond culture and society facilitates a global, genre, approach to studying horror.

However, Willis observes that this approach to studying horror films 'lifted [them] out of the national contexts within which they were produced, thereby evacuating them of much of their social significance' (Willis, 2005, p. 163). Furthermore, Schneider writes that monsters must be 'invested with cultural relevance' for the successful horrifying of viewers (Schneider, 2000, pp. 169, 170). This all suggests that horror films can also be read in more culturally specific contexts, and Willis builds upon Hutchings' call for films of the horror genre to be regarded as part of a national film culture, proposing a socially and culturally specific model for interpreting Spanish horror films.

> The horror genre's manifestation in Spanish Cinema must be understood as part of a particular set of national circumstances, circumstances that impacted greatly on the use of the generic codes and conventions of the horror film by Spanish filmmakers of the period [and that] horror offered directors the opportunity to challenge and critique the dominant values of the Franco regime.
>
> (Willis, 2005, p. 163).

The sentiment at the heart of Fantastic Factory may have been to put 'Spain, Catalonia and Europe' into the history of cinema as stated by Fernández, but he specifically wanted this to be for 'contribution to revolutionising the fantastic genre' rather than for any reasons pertaining to internationalising Catalan culture more generally. This emphasis on genre identity rather than place identity echoes the indifferent sentiments of the filmmakers towards national identity be it Spanish, Catalan, or otherwise. However, as was explored in the literature review with reference to Robert Sklar, there is crossover between nation and genre in the marketing of 'Spanish Horror' to an international audience, meaning that although notions of national specificity (whether Spanish or Catalan) may be avoided in filmmaking, it may be added after the fact for marketing purposes. Furthermore, if cultural relevance is necessary for the effective horrifying of viewers and horror production should be understood as part of a nation's film culture, especially in Spain, then a culturally specific reading of REC series is timely. Recalling that much of Spanish horror is made in Barcelona, and therefore can simultaneously be claimed as 'Catalan' suggests that in 'Spanish Horror', we may also find 'Catalan Horror'.

Catalan, Spanish, and Global are intertwined in horror, as in other modes of filmmaking, and this either suggests the redundancy of thinking about national horror cinemas, or adds a layer of complexity. Furthermore, much like in documentary, filmmakers in the horror genre can escape their national or regional contexts through sources of inspiration, genre conventions and audiences. Writing about Catalan cinema generally, Martí Olivella observes that directors such as Balgueró and Villaronga signal 'the coming of age of a local cinematography that is clearly thinking and filming globally' (Martí Olivella, 2011, p.

188). His observation recalls the 'dual mode of address' that Amago writes about in reference to Villaronga's *Pa negre,* where Villaronga expresses *catalanitat* through 'casting, location, source text, story, language and mise en scène' and uses a mode of address that 'is clearly conceived in international and commercial terms' (Amago, 2013, p. 111).

This chapter argues that Balagueró and Plaza develop a mode of address that can be understood as global in its appeal to the horror genre conventions, but simultaneously Spanish, or Catalan, upon closer reading and this is especially evident in the *[·REC]* series, the 'first horror franchise to come out of Spain' (Lázaro-Reboll, 2012, p. 271). The narrative of this series follows the progression of a zombie outbreak as it infects an apartment building in Barcelona, a wedding in rural Catalonia, and is eventually quarantined on an oil tanker out at sea. Discussions of this series mostly focus on their 'found footage aesthetic', which ties them in to discourses surrounding the international development of this mode of horror film since *Blair Witch Project* (Sanchez & Myrick, 1999), the *Paranormal Activity* series (2007-2014), and *Cloverfield* (Reeves, 2008). Or, ideas of post-national cinema and metacinematic horror (Rowan-Legg, 2013). The aesthetic of the *[·REC]* films have also already received an fascinating and in-depth analysis by Xavier Aldana Reyes in his chapter, 'The *[·REC]* films: Affective Possibilities and Stylistic Limitations of Found Footage Horror' (Aldana Reyes, 2015). However, here it is argued that the found footage aesthetic allows *[·REC]* to function for this series of films as the opening scene of *Pa negre* functions for that film; using horror aesthetics and unexplained violence to prepare for the metaphors that follow.

Therefore, this chapter puts forward that this aesthetic can also be seen as key to culturally specific readings when considered in relation to plot, narrative, mise-en-scene, language and setting. Examining cultural specificity in the *[·REC]* series is necessarily complicated by the presence of two cultures with often distinct experiences of shared historical events.

Given that a 'dual mode of address' implies only two audiences with whom to communicate, 'the international' and 'the national', it may be more appropriate to speak of a 'triple mode of address' when examining cultural specificity in the *[·REC]* series. Balagueró and Plaza have foregone their previous tendencies to film in the English language and with English actors to set *[·REC]* *[·REC]²* and *[·REC]³: Genesis* in Spain, specifically the centre of contemporary Barcelona and rural Catalonia. They also film in the Spanish language and the snippets of Catalan from 'young policeman' (Jorge Yammam Serrano) in *[·REC],* as well as more extensive Catalan dialogue in *[·REC]³: Genesis*, establish cultural specificity for both Spanish and Catalan speakers.

The use of horror devices in documentary films such as *Monos como Becky* or historical fiction such as *Pa negre* has been discussed in chapters four and five as a self-reflexive tool through which to prompt recognition of historical trauma in general or in Catalonia. Others have taken a similar approach to analysing Spanish films that incorporate aspects of horror; Kinder (1993) and Wright (2013) both examine the 'horrific' elements of films outside of the horror genre. Furthermore, Guillermo del Toro's *El espinazo del diablo* (2001) and *El laberinto del fauno* (2006), set in Spain and Catalonia respectively, are often analysed in terms of Spanish historical trauma, but they were both set during the Spanish Civil War and therefore called out for such analysis. However, in the first *[·REC]* film, the footage is never found, nor is it visibly set in the past. Rather, the immediacy of the reality TV aesthetic and the proximity of the threat means that whereas other films may be analysed in terms of how they demonstrate contemporary understandings of historical trauma, it is more suitable to analyse the REC series in terms of how this affects present-day society in Barcelona, Catalonia, and/or Spain, depending on the perspective of the viewer. This chapter will argue that *[·REC]* puts the necessary mechanisms in place for culturally specific readings before *[·REC]²* is analysed in terms of Spanish cultural specificity and *[·REC]³: Genesis* in terms of Catalan cultural specificity. The chapter ends

with a discussion of how the lack of cultural specificity in *[·REC]4: Apocalypse* can illuminate the delicate nature of the balance between cultural specificity and global appeal in film. Thus, the final chapter of this thesis contributes an analysis of local, national and global aesthetics in a horror film franchise made in Barcelona to the discussion of regional/national film production in a globalised context within New Catalan Cinema.

Self-reflexive aesthetics and metaphor in *[·REC]*

Shelagh Rowan-Legg writes that '*[·REC]* turns the found footage film into a commentary on Spanish tabloid television, its journalistic presentation and the public's appetite for scandal' (Rowan-Legg, 2013, p. 215). This understanding of *[·REC]* frames its social criticism as an extension of that which is first evident in *Tesis*. However, when considering that the content of much Spanish and Catalan television of the mid-2000s was the recuperation of historical memory, social or media criticism in the *[·REC]* series becomes more specifically about the effects of the recuperation of historical memory in Spain and Catalonia. In his book, *Shocking Representations: Historical Trauma, National Cinema and the Modern Horror Film*, Adam Lowenstein writes that horror is the genre through which events are 'recognised as wounds in the fabric of culture and history that bleed through conventional confines of time and space'(Lowenstein, 2005, p. 2). According to him, the conventions of the horror genre enable the creation of shock factor that is necessary for what he calls 'the allegorical moment', described as 'a shocking collision of film, spectator and history where registers of bodily space and historical time are disrupted, confronted and intertwined' (Lowenstein, 2005, p. 2,3). In *[·REC]*, the found footage aesthetic that guaranteed its international success contributes to creating an allegorical moment in which film collides with spectator and history. This can and has been interpreted in *[·REC]* as criticism of contemporary TV, but when considering setting, characters, mise-en-scene and the particular kind of monster being dealt with by our on-

screen counterparts, as well as the content of much of TV in question, allegorical understandings of *[·REC]* reveal another complexity of cultural specificity.

In the opening scene, TV actress Manuela Velasco plays reality TV presenter Ángela Vidal is preparing the introduction for a (fictional) programme called '*Mientras Usted Duerme'* ('While you are asleep'). Their programme investigates what goes on at night in Barcelona and in this episode she and her cameraman Pablo (cinematographer Pablo Rosso) go to the Eixample fire station in central Barcelona. They take and re-take the opening scene of *Mientras Usted Duerme*, which is also the opening scene of *[·REC],* and which is almost identical to a scene from *OT: la película,* a documentary about the contestants of an X-Factor style reality TV show on tour. *OT* was Balagueró and Plaza's first co-directed film, and there they worked with cinematographer Pablo Rosso, line producer Teresa Gefaell and editor David Gallart, who had previously worked with each of them on Fantastic Factory productions (Balagueró and Plaza, 2002). That the directors, cinematographer and editor of *[·REC]* have backgrounds in both horror and documentary filmmaking is significant for understanding the importance of the aesthetic. Indeed, Balagueró states that *[·REC]* was intended as 'a documentary of a false reality' which recalls *El taxista ful,* discussed in chapter four as a self-reflexive piece of filmmaking (Comas, 2010, p. 322).

Ángela and Pablo film the goings-on at the fire station; interviewing different firefighters and exploring the facilities. They partner up with firemen Manu (Ferran Terraza) and Álex (David Vert), who receive a call about a distressed woman in an apartment block, so Ángela and Pablo follow them, camera in hand. At the apartment building, we meet the concerned neighbours and the police officers who were called to the scene, following them up to the woman's apartment. For these first twelve minutes, the film appears to be the 'making of' of a reality TV show. However, as Ángela, turns her back to the firefighters trying to force entry to the apartment in order to prepare an introduction to the scene for the TV audience, a loud bang occurs, making Ángela scream. Although we could see the

source of the noise, her fright pre-empts the horror that follows. Plaza states that when he and Balagueró showed his sister the first twelve minutes up until this scene, she 'thought it was a documentary', and this is when they 'knew it was going to work' (Belluco, 2008). According to Rowan-Legg, the aim of *[·REC]* was 'to recreate this reality television technique, and present spectators with a story that Plaza would term both as ridiculous as the stories shown on 'telebasura' ('teletrash'), and as disturbing as the style which those shows used (Rowan-Legg, 2013, p. 214). This introduces Schneider's idea that successful horrifying of viewers requires that monsters are invested with cultural relevance. The idea that 'the zombie lends itself to metaphors of the masses' is essential for this understanding of *[·REC]* as comment on contemporary Spanish and Catalan society as they deal with the return of history, (Hunt, Lockyer and Williamson, 2014, p. 2).

Ángela, Pablo and the officials enter the flat and encounter Mrs Izquierdo, (Martha Carbonell), whose character name could be translated as 'Mrs. Left' in a possibly accidental but nonetheless powerful culturally specific metaphor for the source of chaos that ensues. She is the woman about whom the emergency call was made, and we can see that she will be the first (living) zombie. She hesitates, and tension builds before she attacks a symbol of authority, the police officer. The building is quarantined, and one-by-one, the residents become zombies. They discover that source of the zombie infection comes from Jennifer (Claudia Silva), a little girl who had not been showing symptoms. As they realise this, she turns to bite her mother, disappears off into the depths of the building, and they do not see her again. Ángela and Pablo navigate their way around the labyrinthine building with diminishing numbers of survivors, and eventually flee to the top floor apartment, owned by 'a man from Madrid who never comes, it has been closed for years'. Newspaper clippings and a Dictaphone recording found in the attic suggest that 'the Madeiros girl', a young Portuguese girl possessed by a demon, was brought to this attic so that a Vatican priest could perform experiments on her and find an antidote to demonic

possession. In the attic, they encounter a monstrous being (Javier Botet); barely human, but visibly a girl; presumably the Madeiros girl. Pablo dies and in the final shot, and the monster drags Ángela off-screen, leaving the film open for a sequel.

Because of the darkness, the Madeiros girl is only visible through night vision, creating a supernatural aesthetic, which is now green, eerie and in which even humans do not look human. However, Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet writes that night vision 'is a technology for investigating a visual field: it promises to reveal aspects of reality that are hidden to the naked eye' (Monnet, 2015, p. 127). Therefore, the use of night vision to see the Madeiros girl establishes that the camera has an active role in the survival of the characters. Paradoxically, the camera is also the reason that Ángela and Pablo find themselves in an apartment block full of zombies and monsters in the first place. Satisfying curiosity about what happens 'while you are asleep' is their job as a reality TV crew working on that programme. The title of the fictional reality TV show and the labyrinthine-like apartment block both allude to a desire to satisfy curiosity about the inner workings of the mind. The active role of the camera creates a self-reflexivity in *[·REC]* about how this curiosity is satisfied, and what horrors it may lead to. This invites a more culturally specific reading of [REC], which will complement the analyses already done about how it functions as an international horror.

The entire film is shot through Pablo's camera, so Pablo Rosso is playing himself as a camera operator, Manuela is playing herself as a TV presenter and apart from Manu and Álex, everyone in the fire station is a non-actor. Not only does this work in terms of the aesthetic, but creates a self-reflexive twist not dissimilar from that of *El taxista ful,* and suggests a likeness to Amenábar's *Tesis* (1996). Along with *El dia de la bestia* (de la Iglesia, 1992) *Tesis* marked a return to using the horror genre for social criticism in Spain and Plaza openly admires both of these films (Belluco, 2008). Agustín Rico Albero writes about *[·REC]* that, 'by using metalinguistic (fiction within fiction) the directors seem to be

reflecting, with irony, on the reality shows which have dominated Spanish television screens since the late 1990s' (Rico Albero, 2014, p. 330). The documentary-like aesthetic involves long takes, interviews, diegetic sound, as well as footage that would be cut before broadcast such as instances where Ángela tells Pablo what to film. Firstly, this works to 'emphasise the verisimilitude of the story and of the characters' experiences' which makes it a successful horror film (Rico Albero, 2014, p. 331). However, it also 'questions the limits (or lack thereof) of the Spanish media […] through gore and spectacular violence', and the attitude that there 'should be no limits to showing violence as long as it is ostensibly used to inform the public' (Rico Albero, 2014, p. 332). The findings of the *Movimiento para la recuperación de memória histórica* revealed the gore and violence of recent Spanish history and were obsessively documented by the media throughout the 2000s, including in the aforementioned del Toro films set in Spain.

An event that is understood as a catalyst for returning to Spain's unresolved past occurs in 1998, when (Spanish) judge Baltasar Garzón made an order for the extradition of General Pinochet from London on charges of crimes against humanity. This has been termed a 'psychological transference, the desire to do to Pinochet what could not be done to Franco' and it is understood as representing an 'irruption of memory, a moment when a nation is reminded of its unresolved issues' (Encarnación, 2008, p. 448). In 2000 the first national human rights organisation with the aim of recovering historical memory emerged, the *Associación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica* / *Association for the Recovery of the Historical* Memory (ARMH). Its first act was the exhumation of a mass grave containing the corpses of thirteen Republicans who were executed by Falangists in 1936 near León (Asocación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, 2015). The number of deaths under Franco are estimated at 580,000, so other organisations soon followed, and in 2008 there were over 160 associations working at the national, regional, and provincial levels (Encarnación, 2008, p. 448). These organisations worked mostly on locating mass

graves and exhumations, but also collecting oral histories before living memory disappeared to help locate graves and document a period of time which had been officially 'forgotten' under the *Pacto del Olvido* (Pact of Silence) in order to facilitate the Transition to Democracy. Spanish and Catalan media of the early-mid 2000s was populated with images of dead bodies, and the return of personal and collective traumatic memories. As with the outbreak of chaos and violence beginning with Mrs Izquierdo in *[·REC],* the *Movimiento* started on the Left: the Spanish 'law of historical memory' and the Catalan 'law of democratic memory' were both passed by socialist governments.

The purpose for filming in *[·REC]* may have started out as a reality TV show and become a chronicle of survival, but after the characters are quarantined it becomes the only means of evidencing that the authorities are 'willing to let "us" die', as Ángela points out. The central role of the camera, and the mediatisation of an event in which they are involved only because of banal curiosity is thus established, and is easily comparable to the central role of the media in fuelling the memory wars of the 2000s. 'They need to know everything', cries Ángela when Pablo is asked to stop filming by the members of authority who are also quarantined in the building. This exchange between the civilian characters and the authorities occurs repeatedly throughout the first two films, and is parodied in the third, where the self-reflexivity moves from camerawork to dialogue, plot and narrative. As Aldana Reyes points out, the civilian characters' protests against being told to stop filming in *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* can be understood as a desire to challenge 'the official version of events as reported by authorities'.

The inhabitants of an apartment block in Spain and Catalonia are called 'the community' (*la comunidad* in Castilian, or *la comunitat* in Catalan). 'The community' in *[·REC]* is an international group, as is contemporary society in Barcelona. The apartment block that this community inhabits immediately creates a sense of 'returning to the past'. There are spaces in the building that are modern and brightly lit such as the warehouse, the office and the

Argentinian Cesar's (Carlos Lasarte) apartment. However, only the private apartments of the Catalan and Spanish residents are distinctly archaic with dark, heavy furniture and dim lighting. Mise en scène therefore serves as a reminder that although memory is private, historical memory can also be collective. That Ángela and Pablo investigate the city of Barcelona at night, while the community is sleeping, not only creates a good premise for a horror movie, it also contributes to the metaphor that they are delving into a collective past, camera in hand. What they discover is violence, horror and a rabid infectious rage in the form of zombieism. They become stuck, quarantined by the authorities, and navigate their way to the attic, where relics are usually stored. In the attic, they find a monstrous child.

As explored by Jo Labanyi, the return of repressed memories is usually associated with ghosts, and is key to understanding the fluidity between art house and horror modes in Spanish cinema.

> Ghosts are the return of the repressed of history - that is, the mark of an all-too-real historical trauma which has been erased from conscious memory, but which makes its presence felt through ghostly traces.
>
> (Labanyi, 2002, p. 6)

Labanyi draws on Derrida's idea that ghosts are the traces of those who were not allowed to leave a trace, and who were excluded from the dominant narratives of the victors: particularly 'under capitalist modernity with its competitive, market-led equation of value with success', and that this process of 'rendering ghostly those areas of culture consumed by history's losers is a process specific to the construction of the modern nation-state' (ibid. p.2). She outlines Derrida's three options of dealing with historical trauma. The first is to deny the existence of ghosts, as with the Pacto del Olvido. The second is to cling to them obsessively and allow the past to take over the present and convert it into a living death, as in Freud's definition of melancholia. The third is to or offer them habitation in order to acknowledge their presence as passed (Labanyi, 2000, p. 175). The third option is the most relevant to the role that film could be seen to play in this study, as one medium in which

the ‘ghostly traces’ of repressed history reside; visible, but suitably distanced. Without straying too far into psychoanalysis, it is possible to acknowledge that post-Franco, Spanish horror film ‘offers ways to express the horrors of the regime as well as an arena for the exploration of new and emergent national and aesthetic differences’ (Allmer, Brick and Huxley, 2012, p. 118).

However, the return of memory in *[·REC]* is not associated with ghosts, but monsters (zombies), and monstrous children (Jennifer and the Madeiros girl). A focus on the figure of the child in Spanish cinema has been a recurrent theme in literature and culminates in Sarah Wright’s invaluable contribution to the field, *The Child in Spanish Cinema* (2013). Wright puts forward the compelling suggestion that the child, memory and horror are intrinsically linked (Wright, 2013, p. 90). Drawing on Kinder and Douwe Draaisma, she develops this further to explore the children of Spanish cinema as innocent witnesses to war, representing an appeal to the memory of all those who grew up on the losing side under Francoism, through the memory of the film director (ibid.). She writes that, ‘a recurrent motif in films with recreated memories of war and its aftermath is the child and the monster, or in a metonymic twist, the monstrous child’ (Wright 2013, p.94). Thus, the return of repressed memory is also associated with monstrous children. *[·REC]* is not associated with war or its aftermath, but rather, the effects on contemporary society of revisiting war and its aftermath. The losing side under Francoism in Catalonia is more complex than simply ‘Republican’, but also ‘Republican Catalan’ and by extension, because of cultural and linguistic repression, Catalans more generally.

Chapter five explored the complexity of narrating the Catalan history of repression and resistance with respect to historical films. However, this analysis of the *[·REC]* series is understood as critical reflection on the effect that the collision of past and present has had on contemporary Spanish and Catalan society in the 2000s. The collision of film, spectator and history (or the return of history) through the aesthetic and narrative of *[·REC]*,

foreshadows the development of this metaphor in the rest of the series. The violence is left unsolved, meaning that as in *Pa negre*, there is detective work to be done.

> Since the film does not directly answer any questions regarding the viral outbreak, the viewer is also invited to become a species of narrator, putting together the pieces of the *[·REC]* puzzle. For example, when the final scene introduces a number of newspaper cut-outs stuck to a wall, one can build a loose backstory by reading between the lines, but this is not something the characters have time to voice themselves.
>
> (Aldana Reyes, 2015, p. 154)

Aldana Reyes views taping as synonymous with witnessing as a sidestep for narrative shortcomings, but he does suggest that Ángela's constant appeals to '[t]ape everything!', 'signal that the images become a form of record or document through which to challenge the official version of events as reported by the authorities' (Aldana Reyes, 2015, p. 154). In a culturally specific reading narrative shortcomings are central to understanding the *[·REC]* series as a reflection on the effects of the *Movimiento de la Recuperación de la Memória Histórica* on contemporary society. Plot resolution is beside the point if *[·REC]* is understood as a prologue to the culturally specific readings of *[·REC]* and *[·REC]*^{2}, and mostly functions to introduce the key issues and establish the triple mode of address through plot, languages, setting, and mise-en-scène. In fact, gaps in narrative can even be seen as symptomatic of this allegory, because the memory wars saw competing narratives emerge and, especially with regards to the missing children, there are still large gaps in historical knowledge.

The aesthetic, plot, narrative, setting, languages, characters and monsters of *[·REC]* provide the necessary elements for a complex culturally specific allegorical moment articulated through the global medium of horror film. There was initially no intention of making a sequel, but commercial success meant that there was the budget and desire to do so, and it is argued here the *[·REC]²* expands upon the Spanish specificity, understood here to mean all of Spain including Catalonia.

Spanish specificity in *[·REC]²*

[·REC]² begins shortly after the end of *[·REC]* in narrative time. Developing the found footage aesthetic, this film features a number of characters and a plot that facilitates the presence of more cameras. A GOES (*Grupos Operativos Especiales de Seguridad*,'Special Security Operative Group') team is sent in to secure the building and allow a minister from the department of health to take samples. They wear head cameras, and Rosso (cinematographer Pablo Rosso again) has a high-spec digital camera to film inside the building. His camera is able to cut into the headcams of his colleagues and therefore grants the audience access to parallel action scenes. As in the first film, the cinematographer is central, which signals a metafictional narrative and a development not just on the aesthetic, but also reflexivity and metaphor. A secondary plot line is provided by some teenagers playing in the street who see the commotion and decide to sneak into the building, filming on a phone as they do so. By 2009 when *[·REC]²* was produced, the *Movimiento de la Recuperacion de la Memoria Histórica* had, as discussed, grown enormously and consisted of a variety of organisations all focused on different aspects of the same issue, reflected in the use of multiple cameras. The film starts with the GOES team entering the building with Owen (Jonathon Mellor) from the Ministry of Health who has the objective of finding any piece of information that might explain what is going on. They head straight to the attic and Owen tells Rosso, 'documentation, you know how it goes, film everything' in a nod to the tag line from the first film.

Particularly interesting for the culturally specific reading is the first violent scene. On their way to the attic the team observe that they 'should have secured downstairs' but Owen informs them there is no time. Martos (Alejandro Casaseca) goes to investigate anyway, only to find that the noise is a gramophone playing '*En tierra extraña',* sung by Conchita Piquer and composed by Manuel Panella in 1927 in Mrs. Izquierdo's apartment. The song narrates a New Year's Eve party in New York, at which many Spanish people were present

(Piquer & Panella, 1927). The section of the song that is playing translates as, 'Suddenly we heard a gramophone/"quiet everyone" I said/and you could hear a *paso doble* that made us sigh/the happiness ceased/everyone quiet now/and nobody laughing/as everyone was crying listening to this music/there, in a foreign land were our sighs/'sighs of Spain". These lyrics narrate the action taking place on screen ('suddenly we heard a gramophone'), but they also work to embed Spanish cultural specificity. This song is making reference to an earlier song '*Suspiros de España'*, composed in 1902 by Antonio Álvarez Alonso. It also featured in a 1938 film of the same name, directed by Benito Perojo González, that was one of many films on the Nationalist side 'seeking legitimacy in the glory days of Spanish history' (Álvarez López, 2016, p. 356). Furthermore, *Suspiros de España* featured centrally in *Soldados de Salamina* (*Soldiers of Salamina*) (Trueba, 2003), a film in which a contemporary character investigates and writes about a Republican soldier who allows a Falangist to escape the firing squad during the Civil War. The song is therefore already linked to the investigation of the past before featuring in *[·REC]²*.

The use of *Suspiros de España* at the first instance of violence in *[·REC]²* alerts us to the culturally specific mode of address in and confirms the reading of *[·REC]* as an allegory for the collision of past and present on camera in Spain. A song that featured in a recent Spanish film dealing more explicitly with investigating the past from a Left-wing position, playing in Mrs. Izquierdo's old-fashioned apartment, can be understood to represent a past that the authorities had 'no time to secure' in the rush to establish democracy. Martos ventures into the apartment (read the past) with caution, because he knows that something awful has happened to others who have done so. He is met with a violent zombie encounter, and he too becomes a zombie, now driven only by the desire to spread his condition to others. As the chief of police stated outside the building about the infected, 'the symptoms are very similar to rabies'. In Spanish '*la rabia'* also means anger, rage and fury, which many people felt as exhumations continued and more was discovered about the horrific

acts carried out, often within the same community or even family.[13] If the zombies of *[·REC]* were undead, then they would lend themselves to a metaphor for the bodies being unearthed in the exhumations. However, the zombies of *[·REC]* are living, and infected by rage, suggesting they are a metaphor for contemporary Spanish society.

After Martos becomes infected, the remaining team members demand to know what is going on and Owen confirms our expectations, set up in the previous film, that there was a girl possessed by a demon in that attic who was taken there by a priest to carry out tests in secret and find an antidote to demonic possession. He elaborates that it appeared to have worked, but that something must have gone wrong. Confused, Larra (Ariel Casas) shouts 'We were told you were from the Ministry of Health!', to which Owen replies, 'don't be a fool […] it has nothing to do with them, they don't know what is going on, they are not in charge here'. Owen is not a technician from the Ministry of Health but a priest from the Vatican, and he needs to find a blood sample from the Madeiros girl in order to find the cure for demonic possession, which is now pinpointed as the cause of zombieism. The infection is now revealed to be both biomedical and religious in nature, given that it is highly infectious, but seemingly has its origins in demonic possession.

The medical/religious nature of evil in the *[·REC]* series is what links it to what has been termed Balagueró's 'œuvre' as a horror auteur (Lázaro-Reboll, 2012, p. 248). Balagueró himself states that it comes from a fascination with the occult library of his Grandfather, a medical doctor (Belluco, 2008). However here it can be seen to take on new meaning. One of the teenagers, Tito (Pau Poch), gets infected and is used as a vehicle for the demon to communicate with Owen and taunt him for not being able to find the fallen angel (demon) who is being held in a prison of darkness until Judgement Day. They realise now why the

[13] See *Ghosts of Spain; Travels through Spain and Its Silent Past* (Giles Tremmett 2007) for an overview of the way in which the recuperation of historical memory has affected contemporary Spanish society and politics.

night vision was central to Ángela, who has since reappeared apparently unharmed, being able to see the Madeiros girl; it is the only way to access the prison of darkness.

National Catholicism was a key feature of Franco's dictatorship, and Owen's masked identity suggests that the Catholic Church is more powerful than the state despite the official separation of church and state in the 1978 constitution (Section 16, article 3). The scene where Owen's true identify is revealed functions as an observation that the separation, and therefore the constitution, had not been effective. This is emphasised by the sudden sound of Rosso's voice form behind the camera saying, 'Sons of bitches, they tricked us'. The metafictional construction of the film means that the camera operator can speak without breaking the fourth wall. However, because he is behind the camera we do not expect him to speak. So, when his first real line apart from saying 'cutting in' when accessing the visuals from someone else's headcam is to curse the state and the church for having tricked 'us', it is effective in creating the collision of film, spectator and history necessary for this, the second, allegorical moment of *[·REC]²*. The cultural specificity here is subtle, as is the criticism of the failure of the Transition and the Constitution to have really changed anything. This allows the film to retain its global appeal whilst also providing all of the elements necessary for a culturally specific reading.

After this scene, the GOES team and Owen go up into the top floor apartment looking for a vial of blood that, according to Owen, belongs to the Madeiros girl and provides them with their only chance of stopping the spread of the infection to outside of the building. They proceed to find documentation not just of the Medeiros girl, but also of the Priest's experiments on dozens of other children. Larra is outraged and screams that they are innocent children. He demands to know what is happening before one of these monstrous children falls from the attic trapdoor and attacks. The operatives refuse to shoot it, but Owen does. Then, as Larra explores the air duct and retrieves the vial of blood, these children chase him out. Owen performs a test on the blood to check that it is from the

Madeiros girl and it spontaneously combusts. The antidote is gone, and there is now no cure to the zombie outbreak. If the cultural specificity of the scene in which Owen reveals he is a priest did not prompt a culturally specific reading, then the use of zombie children provides another opportunity. The operatives had learned of the horrors that took place towards children in that building, just as contemporary society was uncovering more about the horrors of the Civil War and dictatorship during the recuperation of historical memory, especially with regards to children.

In 2002, *Televisió de Catalunya* (TV3) had produced the feature documentary *Els nens perduts del franquisme* (The lost children of Franco), with Montse Armengou (Armengou, 2002). Unfortunately, the documentary was only broadcast in Catalonia, The Basque Country and Andalusia, where it was screened in the middle of the night, but soon the topic was the focus of much media attention (Navarro, 2008). Linking Catholicism with the mistreatment of children reflects developments in the movement for historical memory which by that time was uncovering the extent to which the State and the Church were complicit in the hundreds of thousands aforementioned cases of '*niños perdidos'* 'lost children'. The *Asociación Nacional de Afectados por Adopciones Irregulars* (National Association for People Affected by Irregular Adoptions) 'ANADIR' estimates that from the dictatorship up until the 1990s, '300,000 children were stolen or illegally adopted' (Anadir; El sotano, 2013). Judge Garzón was again the catalyst for this when he released a report in 2008 on the forced disappearance of people under Franco, categorising this act as a crime against humanity. One chapter of his report is devoted to the '*niños perdidos de la dictadura'* and his investigations into the systemised disappearing of children from Republican mothers between 1937 and 1950, where their names would be changed and they would be brought up by families in the regime (Yoldi, 2008).

> Purification and purging were fundamental concepts in 1940s Spain, as they had been in all the episodes, ethical or political, that inhabit Europe's dark mid-twentieth century. Among the victims of this worldview were the 'lost children' of

> Francoism. These were children who, after being removed from their imprisoned mothers, had their names changed and could thus be adopted by families congenial to the Francoist regime. In addition, many thousands of working-class children were sent to state institutions because their own Republican families were considered unfit to raise them. There were also cases of child refugees being kidnapped from France by the regime's external repatriation service and then placed in Francoist state institutions.
>
> (Duprey, 2012, p. 70)

There are also young protagonists in *[·REC]²* , the teenagers who, again out of curiosity, end up embroiled in the chaos inside the building and one by one they become zombies, who we learn are slaves to the Madeiros girl when they meet up with the GOES team and one of them, apparently possessed, taunts Owen's inability to find the Madeiros girl, 'hiding in the light'. Thus, the trope of the monstrous child set up in *[·REC]* is developed in *[·REC]²,* which suggests a Spanish cultural specificity. Building on Carolyn Steedman's description of children as 'literally the bloody fragments of another body, little parcels of flesh split off from another', Wright describes the importance of the visual comparison between child protagonist and Frankenstein's monster in *El espíritu de la colmena* (Wright, 2013, p. 91). In Spanish cinema, it is evident that borrowing from the horror genre has provided much non-horror cinema with a vehicle through which the horrors of the past are articulated. Marsha Kinder's *Blood Cinema* (1993) establishes that understanding screen violence is central to understanding cinema as a tool for reconstructing national identity in Spain through dealing with the horrors of the past.

The monstrous children that populate *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* easily signal the presence of cultural specificity, whether as a vehicle through which horrors of the past are articulated, or in reference to this trope within Spanish cinema. The source of the outbreak is young Jennifer, who appears to have contracted the infection from the Madeiros girl whose demonic possession facilitates her to infect others. The zombie-children in the air ducts of this building, who can be understood as a metaphor for collective sub-consciousness

because of mise-en-scène and the title of the reality TV show, have been stolen and experimented upon by the Catholic Church in the failed search for a cure, all of which took place in secret. *[·REC]²* features a lot more external shots, situating the action in Barcelona. The teenagers are initially pictured in this setting, linking them to contemporary society, but they too become zombies as they enter the metaphorical past and get caught in the (literal) crossfire between the authorities on the outside and the infected in the inside.

The above scenes demonstrate that *[·REC]²* extends the culturally specific metaphor of *[·REC]*. However, the centrality of the camera and the found footage aesthetic is still important because night vision becomes central to both the plot and narrative, confirming Rico-Albero's aforementioned observation that the *[·REC]* series can be understood as a comment on contemporary Spanish media, and thus placing it within a national-generic continuum that started with *Tesis*. The camera (specifically, the camera from the first film) grants access to another dimension when night vision is switched on. The Madeiros girl inhabits that dimension and the GOES team and Owen are only granted access by the camera, navigating their way through this world by following Rosso's directions. Thus, the media is now in control of how the plot proceeds.

The supernatural aesthetic is also extended into plot and narrative. In *[·REC]²* it is revealed that the source of demonic possession is a parasite that has used the Madeiros girl as a host body and in doing so, made her immune to zombification. The demon parasite is then transmitted to Angela and enables her (and it) to escape the building by killing and then imitating Owen. Plaza states, 'we wanted to have that paranormal twist we haven't seen before in a zombie film, to have this paranormal, religious explanation for the infection. We thought that was a cool twist.' (Barone, 2012). Leon Hunt, Sharon Lockyer and Milly Williamson point out that, 'while the modern zombie is primarily the creation of scientific catastrophe or biological mutations, viruses, radiation and toxic chemicals, it can also, like the classic vampire) be a product of metaphysical evil' and point to Stephen Thrower's

suggestion that ‘Italian horror’s particular take on the physical corruption of the zombie was driven by the legacy of Catholicism’ (Thrower, 1996, p. 351 [cited in]; Hunt, et. al, 2014, p. 6). The film is set in Barcelona, which in itself is insignificant, but becomes much more significant when incorporated into an analysis of the series as an allegory and relates to Pierre Nora’s idea of ‘memory places’, as ‘the dependence of memories on attachment to some concrete site’ (Labanyi, 2000, p. 176).

Barcelona was the last city to be taken by the nationalist forces, and therefore represents a resistance to Franco that blurs the Right/Left-Españolista/Catalanista dichotomies, a topic explored in *Pa negre*. The source of trauma is locked away in an attic in Barcelona owned by ‘a man from Madrid who never comes’ and has ‘been closed for years’. The complex, non-physical and quasi-religious nature of the source of zombieism hidden in this attic also recalls the characteristics of historical trauma in Catalonia during the post war period. Complex because of the Left/Right-españolista/catalanista intersecting dichotomies, non-physical because of the cultural and linguistic repression, and quasi-religious because of the relationship between the Catholic Church with both Francoism and, in Catalonia, Catalanism and the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the characters are unable to reach the source of chaos without the aid of their camera. When they finally arrive, it is revealed that the source of chaos has moved from the spatially and temporally distanced Madeiros girl to Ángela, representing the contemporary media who, ‘just came to make a TV programme’. The film ends as Ángela, possessed by the demon parasite, is about to exit the building, after having imitated Owen’s voice to get past the voice-recognition security feature on his walkie-talkie and order the evacuation of ‘a lone surviving woman’.

Catalan Specificity in *[·REC]³: Genesis*

The ending of *[·REC]²* suggests that a third film would continue the narrative in Barcelona, where chaos would be unleashed upon the Catalan capital as Ángela, now hosting the demon parasite, escapes the apartment block representing the past to unleash the zombie virus upon contemporary society. However, the third instalment actually takes place at the wedding of Clara (Leticia Dolera) and Koldo (Diego Martín) in rural Catalonia, and occurs parallel to the action in *[·REC]².* As explored in chapter four, films set in Barcelona can be seen to articulate a sense of Barcelonan cinema, with the complex coexistence of Spanish and Catalan identities that this entails. However, in chapter five it is observed that films set outside of the city, in the Catalan countryside, denote an understanding of Catalan cinema as that which speaks to the wider Catalan nation. All of this transpires to lend *[·REC]³* an air of 'Meanwhile, in Catalonia…', which is only emphasised further through language, plot, narrative and humour.

In *[·REC]³: Genesis* that the documentary aesthetic is less central to the action, and comedy creeps in to the plot, characters and narrative, suggesting a critical distance from the action taking place. It is also in *[·REC]³: Genesis* that the Catalan language is most-heard, especially among Clara's family. Language sets up Clara's family as Catalan, but visual and verbal references to Valencia, another Catalan-speaking region of Spain and also Plaza's hometown, suggests that Koldo's family are from there, or live there. All of these references occur in the opening scenes, which articulate that the cultural specificity of *[·REC]³: Genesis* is more firmly tied to Catalan-speaking culture than the Spanish specificity of *[·REC]².* By 2011 when *[·REC]³: Genesis* was produced, the media coverage accompanying the progress of the Law of Historical Memory through parliament had subsided and the accompanying circulation of such issues in all of the cultural industries had long reached 'saturation point' highlighted by the publication of Isaac Rosa's *¡Otra*

maldita novela sobre la guerra civil! (Another bloody novel about the civil war!) in 2007 (Labanyi, 2012 p.119). In *[·REC]³: Genesis* this is most obvious through self-parody. The film makes fun of itself, whilst also confirming the reading of this series as allegorical of the presence of history in contemporary Spanish society, and how the reception of this presence, these ghosts and monsters from the past, are dealt with.

Like Andreu in *Pa negre*, the protagonists of *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* function as the audience's on-screen counterparts and the use of P.O.V emphasised this. We can only learn more about the cause of the zombie outbreak as they do. However, in *[·REC]³: Genesis* the P.O.V angle is substituted in part with a more standard set-up that occasionally grants the audience access to more knowledge than the characters on-screen. In *[·REC]³: Genesis*, as the title suggests, this supernatural crossing of dimensions is related to the story of creation, which as explained in *[·REC]²* is when fallen angels (demons) were said to have been put in everlasting chains under darkness until Judgement Day. The Madeiros girl appears in *[·REC]³: Genesis* through the reflections of zombies in television screens and mirrors. If the Madeiros girl represents the horrors of the past and the source of zombieism, then the fact that the zombies of the *[·REC]* series are understood as representing the masses and now reflect her image, means that the horrors of history to which their infection is linked has manifested itself in the present. The Madeiros girl is now able to escape the prison of darkness that Ángela and Pablo had only been able access through using night vision on the camera, and from which she previously could not escape. As she manifests in the zombies of the present, her presence in contemporary society is confirmed. Her escape also suggests the coming of Judgement Day, cementing the religious aspect and adding an apocalyptic aspect to the already biohazardous and supernatural zombie outbreak that is unleashing chaos and fear upon the characters and viewers. Kolda and Clara eventually escape the wedding with the help of a priest, but it is

too late as Clara is already infected and they are shot down as they leave the country estate. As in *[·REC]²*, the priest in *[·REC]³: Genesis* is unable to save the day.

Directed only by Plaza, the tone of *[·REC]³: Genesis* is much more light-hearted and takes a comedic approach to horror. Perhaps because of this, it did not fare so well internationally, and horror fans were generally disappointed that it strayed so far from the aesthetic and tone of the first two films. An additional factor for reduced international commercial success is that whereas the culturally specific readings of the first two films are secondary, to the aesthetic, in *[·REC]³: Genesis* cultural specificity, especially in humour, is much more central. It received a good review in *El País* precisely because of the cultural specific humour (Funelle, 2012). However, comedy does not often translate because it relies on prior knowledge of people, events, situations and history that an international audience might not possess. In *[·REC]³: Genesis* cultural specificity is unavoidable and although it speaks to viewers with Spanish cultural knowledge, it is arguably much more of a tongue-in-cheek comment on the increased national sentiment in Catalonia that was emerging throughout the 2000s. As such, the third instalment provides a radically different approach to the discussion of cultural specificity and global appeal in New Catalan Cinema.

The film starts with the menu screen from the supposed wedding video, suggesting that this is found footage, and after a slideshow of the bride and groom growing up which provides us with the necessary emotional connection to the protagonists, the film cuts to a shaky P.O.V shot outside the church. The cameraman is Koldo's nephew Adrián (Àlex Monner), who is filming the wedding. He meets up with the official wedding videographer, 'Atún' (Borja Glez. Santaolalla) from 'Filmax filmaciones', and their conversation foreshadows the ironic and self-aware sense of humour that develops throughout the film. Atún has a steadycam, which Adrián admires, asking if it is possible to make a film with that equipment. Atún's reply is 'here some, but in America, all of them', tipping the viewer

that the aesthetic to follow will be closer to classical Hollywood narrative than documentaryHowever, Atún advises Adrián to film things that others don't see, 'like Dziga Vertov, cinema vérité', with his handheld video recorder. Adrián assures him that he will, adding that he will 'film everything' in a reference to the tag-line from previous two films. A third hand-held camera, operated by Clara's younger sister Tita (Jana Soler), grants us access to Clara getting ready for the wedding.

Cutting back to Adrián's camera, (with the obvious editing excused by the fact that we are supposed to be watching an edited wedding video), we find the link to the previous two films. Adrián's uncle Tío Pepe Víctor (Emilio Mencheta), a proud Valencian and a vet, has a dog bite on his hand. We can only assume is from Max, Jennifer's missing dog in *[·REC],* who in *[·REC]²* we learn infected all the other animals at the surgery. As such, Tío Pepe Victor is the source of the outbreak in *[·REC]³: Genesis,* and his transition to zombieism is slow and passes for comedic drunkenness at first, just as Jennifer's was slow and passed for angina. Eighteen minutes in, and after the party has moved to a country estate, he finally becomes a zombie during the dancing and bites his wife Amparo (Rosa Chevalier). Koldo and Clara are separated, and Koldo seeks safety with Adrián and Tita, breaking Adrián's camera because he is upset about this being filmed despite Adrián's protest; 'I have to tape everything - because the people have a right to know'. At this moment, twenty minutes into the film, the title screen appears which separates the found-footage introduction from the classical Hollywood narrative that takes over, occasionally complimented with security footage. The introduction of extra diegetic sound and colouring at this point emphasises this change, but the narrative continues. In the absence of P.O.V, the humorous elements set up in the first twenty minutes enable the self-reflexive aspect necessary for the collision of film, spectator, and history in the allegorical moment.

Koldo, Tita and Adrián find themselves in the kitchens with Atún and Moncho (David Ramírez), a representative from SGAE (Sociedad general de Autores y Editores, 'Spanish Society of Authors and Publishers') who is in attendance to ensure that royalties are collected for all the songs played at the wedding. His introduction is followed by sinister score, and after he ruins chances of escape through a grate in the same scene, the opportunity is created for Atún, representing Filmax, to curse 'Canon': the name of the royalties-tax in Spain collected by the SGAE, and the name by which Moncho is listed in the credits. This is a none-too-subtle reference to the controversy of the Canon, which was a Spanish tax directly on digital copying for private purposes that was introduced in 2007. This was replaced in 2011 by the Comisión de Propiedad Intelectual (Intellectual Property Commission) as part of the controversial 'Ley Sinde' named after Ángeles Gonzalez Sinde, film director and the minister for culture at the time (EFE, 2011). The 'Ley-Sinde' proposed a closure of all pages linking free downloads or streaming of audio-visual content and was divisive within the film industry, providing an in-joke for professionals in Spanish film industries.

Álex de la Iglesia used his final speech as president of the Spanish Academy at the 2011 Goyas to come out 'in favour of dialogue, instead of what might have been expected, blindly supporting the general desire in the film trade to block all free access to audio visual content subject to copyright and circulating on the internet' (Meras, 2014, p. 344). Rather than seeing 'pirates' as a problem, de la Iglesia sees them as cinema's lost public; citizens to whom filmmakers owe respect for watching their creations. He is of the opinion that, together with telecoms operators, webmasters, and users, the Spanish film industry has to find a new model in order to reach its lost public, stating that 'the internet is the salvation of our cinema' (RTVE, 2011). As a director credited with ushering in the age of Spanish genre cinema for Spanish audiences in the 1990s, it is possible to see a split between audience-centred genre filmmaking and artist-centred 'quality' filmmaking within

the Spanish industry as a whole with regards to this law. *[·REC]³: Genesis* provides the perfect platform for criticising the artist-centred approach because it bears obvious resemblances to Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de Sangre* (*Blood Wedding*), which was at the centre of one of the most public controversies of the SGAE in 2010, when they charged a school 95 euros for putting on this play (*Europa Press*, 2010). In fact, the 'making of' for *[REC]³: Genesis* is even titled '*Preparativos de una boda sangrienta'* ('Preparations for a Bloody Wedding') (Rodal, 2011). Like other jokes and references in *[·REC]³: Genesis,* this is very specific to the Spanish context and seems specifically designed to articulate the opinion of Filmax on the *Ley Sinde* – a reference that international audiences are unlikely to have the relevant prior knowledge to understand. In addition to increased Spanishcultural specificity, there is also increased Catalan specificity.

After being separated, Koldo finds himself hiding from the (always sinister but often comical) zombies in a small chapel, and is trying to think of a way out of the situation. Suddenly he sees two suits of armour. One of them is that of Saint George, the patron saint of Catalonia, and the other has a shield bearing the *Senyera*, the Catalan flag. This leads to the most obviously Catalan-specific comic scene in which the protagonist, dressed as the patron saint of Catalonia, and his *Senyera*-bearing sidekick fight off the zombies in order to find and save Clara. When considering that *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* have already used aesthetics and metaphor as a comment on the Catalan and Spanish media obsession with the past and the chaos that this has caused, *[REC]³: Genesis* can also be understood to comment on media obsessions at the time. However, by 2010 and 2011, there was a new issue preoccupying the Catalan collective mind-set; independence.

The recuperation of historical memory had, as discussed previously, confirmed for many that the Transition had not actually been a Transition, but a way for Francoist ideology to remain in those holding positions of power. A key characteristic of the Transition for Catalonia was the 1979 Statute of Autonomy and the subsequent 'decentralisation of

Spain', which was supposed to satisfy the demands of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, but which created the system of autonomies. Crameri writes that it is logical that, 'since Basque and Catalan nationalism were not simply products of Spain's centralising tendencies, they would not disappear as a result of decentralisation' (Crameri, 2014, p. 61). All over Spain the recuperation of historical memory had been focused on the Civil War and its aftermath, but as Crameri writes, there was another dimension to the recuperation of historical memory in Catalonia.

> […] there is another aspect of historical memory in Catalonia that is more endogenous and is closely related to the evolution of Catalan nationalism. This involves attempts to demonstrate Catalonia's historical differences from the rest of Spain, to protest historical injustices and the way in which these have been glossed over […] Catalan historical memory therefore has a broader historical sweep, concerned not only with the Civil War but with Catalonia's entire national history.
>
> (Crameri, 2014, p. 73)

As a result, the rhetoric in Catalan politics and media during the context of increased support for independence, or at least 'the right to decide' for themselves in the late 2000s and especially around 2010, was often connected with a pre-Franco past, as seen in chapter five. Revisiting the middle ages draw on a period of time when Catalan language, culture and political power was strong under the Crown of Aragon. This Crown included the Kingdom of Aragon, the Principality of Catalonia and the Kingdom of Valencia, who together conquered the Balearic Islands, Corsica, and parts of Greece, Sardinia, and Italy for short periods. This rhetoric represented a renewed vitality in basing claims for Catalan independence on historical fact; that when the Crown of Aragon and Castile were united through marriage and the Crown of Aragon was eventually dissolved, and Barcelona was conquered by the Crown of Castile in 1714, which is commemorated annually on the eleventh of September. This often forms the basis for historical claims that 'Catalonia is not Spain'.

In an interview with Olga Rodal from the costume department in the 'making of' extra DVD feature, she explains that it was an explicit request from Plaza that the armour was

representative of Saint George (Rodal, 2011). The use of suits of armour and the *Senyera*, which was the flag of Aragon, mock this popular discourse and in *[·REC]³: Genesis* Catalan history is treated in a 'carnivalesque' manner which can be understood as the 'parodic debunking of all that a particular society takes seriously (including and in particular that which it fears)' (Morris, 1994, p. 250). Supporting this, the use of medieval knights can be understood as a reference to the Catalan-language *Tirant lo Blanch* (Juanot Martorell, 1490) and/or the Spanish-language *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (Miguel de Cervantes, 1605) which were some of the first examples of parody in literature.

In summary, *[·REC]³: Genesis* was filmed in a context of prolonged recuperation of historical memory where horrors were still being investigated, but many in Spain were fed up with the media obsession with history and historical memory and the change in aesthetic and tone reflect this. Meanwhile, in Catalonia, Catalanist discourse in the media and politics was drawing on medieval history in order to justify claims for nationhood and independence, which had been developing in parallel to the recuperation of historical memory. The carnivalesque nature in which *[REC]³: Genesis* deals with medieval history offers a parodic debunking of that which Catalan society is taking seriously at the time; Catalan nationalism. As such, cultural specificity in *[·REC]³: Genesis* becomes much more obvious and the parodic debunking is made possible through a departure from the original aesthetic. Therefore, it is possible to understand the negative reviews from international horror fans, and therefore the films decreased global appeal, as a result of increased cultural specificity, linked to the change in aesthetic.

Removing Cultural Specificity in *[·REC]4: Apocalypse*

The negative international reviews of *[·REC]³: Genesis* perhaps had an influence on the subsequent removal of cultural specificity in *[·REC]4: Apocalypse*. It may have been accidental in *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* , but was part of the comedy in *[·REC]³: Genesis*, and

was therefore intentional. *[·REC]4: Apocalypse* picks up where the narrative of *[·REC]²* left off. However, although the demon parasite may have escaped the apartment building through using Ángela as a host, she and it now find themselves in quarantine on an oil tanker out at sea, in an unidentifiable international location. The removal of cultural specificity in *[·REC]4: Apocalypse* is not only through location but also that the religious and biomedical reasons for the outbreak are minimised. Instead, the focus of the plot is on finding the parasite that a scared and confused Ángela has transferred to Guzmán (Paco Manzanedo) one of the GOES team members who assisted Ángela's evacuation from the building after the end of narrative time in *[·REC]².*

Message boards on IMDb and horror sites reveal mixed reception among fans about the final instalment to this 'waning franchise' (Thurman, 2015). Some are relieved to see the back of *[·REC]³: Genesis* but others are confused about the whereabouts of the parasite because of a scene in which a sleeping Ángela, under surveillance on CCTV, appears to have the parasite in her stomach. This scene could be a reference to the dream sequence in *Aliens* given the creature-based source of terror that characterises *[·REC]4: Apocalypse,* and the setting of the film on a vessel. However, the use of CCTV implies that it is not a dream, creating significant confusion over who is hosting the parasite at any given time during the film. In the final scene it is eventually clarified that Guzmán had the parasite all along, but because of this confusion *[·REC]4: Apocalypse* is criticised for things like continuity and plot holes, which generally weren't seen as a problem in *[·REC]* or *[·REC]²* despite the complex and unexplained nature of zombieism in those films.

Throughout *[·REC] 4: Apocalypse* Angela is portrayed as innocent, even though viewers who have seen *[·REC]²* assume that she isn't. Also on the ship are Dr. Ricarte (Héctor Colomé) and his team of scientists who are portrayed as evil, but whose final actions

contradict this, Captain Ortega (Mariano Venancio) who seems undisturbed by the presence of a team of scientists and military guards, and numerous other secondary characters. What *[·REC] 4: Apocalypse* does bring with it from *[·REC]³: Genesis* is, strangely perhaps, comedic relief in the form of the ship's radio operator and Ángela's 'number one fan', Nic (Ismael Fritschi) who will eventually assist Ángela's escape as they jump off the ship as it blows up. In the final scene, the parasite is blown off the boat by the blast and gets eaten by a fish, suggesting two outcomes. One possible reading is that the issue may be temporarily resolved through having returned to the 'deep water' of the collective unconscious. An alternative reading may draw upon the fact that the fish can be understood as a reference to Christianity, and therefore perhaps the church, understood as responsible for many of the horrors in *[REC]²*, has managed to make the source of chaos disappear, completing the failed mission of the priests in *[REC]²* and *[REC]³: Genesis*. Either way, the ending ends as both *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²* did, with the possibility for more. Throughout the film, characters blame each other, accuse each other, and distrust each other, and this is amplified by the portrayal of both Guzmán and Ángela as innocent, even though one of them must be hosting the parasite. Given the cultural specificity of the first three films, it is tempting to look for it here, but perhaps more interesting is the fact that, apart from language and some humour, it seems that cultural specificity is conspicuously absent.

In many ways, the *[·REC]* series fulfilled the initial aims of Fantastic Factory, which had dissolved before the first installment, by proving that 'world class products of interest could be made in Barcelona' (Comas, 2010, p. 318). The documentary aesthetic of the first film allowed it to tap into contemporary trends within horror for found footage, and it has been discussed as such. However, this aesthetic is also central to a more culturally specific reading. That the culturally specific reading is complex, because of the nature of the

culture(s), also arguably enhances the appeal of the film to an international horror audience, because it manifests partly in the complex nature of the zombie outbreak caused by a demon parasite that has escaped its 'prison of darkness' because of the arrival of Judgement Day. This pushes the boundaries of both zombie and demon horror monsters and creates multiple forms of zombies in the film. Some of them are traditional impulsive rabid zombies whereas others pass for humans and only 'turn' when they have to. Some are invincible whereas others are not. Some can channel the demon which caused the zombie outbreak and in itself is complicated; inhabiting the monstrous Madeiros girl it is trapped in an alternate dimension that is only accessible through using the night vision on a camera, but is able to escape that dimension once it is in a body that is less monstrous.

Peter Hutchings points out that 'the 'monster as metaphor' approach often assumes that audiences – and sometimes filmmakers as well- are unaware, or at least not fully aware of the true social significance of the horror monster' (Hutchings, 2004, p. 38). Certainly, Balagueró doesn't seem to place much emphasis on the metaphor of the monster, stating that '*[·REC]* was an experiment', and that 'there was a need to break with tradition' (Belluco, 2008). However, in *[·REC]*, the aesthetics, intertextual references, narrative framing and sense of humour suggest a 'Spanishifying', or even 'Catalanising' of contemporary trends in zombie horror and in doing so contributes to Spanish Horror and the global horror genre more generally. The cultural specificity in the first three *[·REC]* films depends not only on the monster as a metaphor, but on all of the elements necessary for making that monster into a metaphor that have been analysed here as present in plot, narrative, setting, mise-en-scene, score, dialogue, aesthetic and tone.

The result in *[·REC]* is a film that introduces the main themes relevant to the culturally specific reading; the curiosity of the media about what is going on at night in Barcelona leads to them wandering into an apartment building that can be understood as the past, and encountering the horrors they find there. At first the horror is symptomatic of the Left, but

soon everyone is infected; the community, the media, and the authorities. In *[·REC]²* the Spanish specificity that is emphasised and the horrors located in the past are specifically located in the Civil War through the use of *Suspiros de España*. Monstrous children are a key feature of this film. In *[·REC]³*: *Genesis* the infection has escaped the apartment block of Spanish specificity and the return to the Civil War. It has infected a wedding in the Catalan countryside, where attempts to save the family are made using ill-fitting suits of armour from a time in Catalonia's national history that is a feature of a growing Catalan nationalist rhetoric, although to no avail. The removal of cultural specificity in *[·REC]4: Apocalypse* signals a desire to recapture an audience who were excluded from the overtly culturally specific *[·REC]³: Genesis* that had also made unwelcome departure from the P.O.V (first reality TV and later official documentation) aesthetic.

In summary, although a kind of background cultural specificity can be seen to have helped the critical and commercial successes of *[·REC]* and *[·REC]²,* it could also be said that too much was damaging to the international success of *[·REC]³:Genesis,* and too little was damaging to *[·REC]4: Apocalypse.* Balagueró and Plaza won 'best director' and Manuela Velasco 'best lead actress' for her role as Ángela Vidal at the 2007 Sitges Fantastic Film Festival, and *[·REC]* became the second top-grossing Spanish film at the box office that year, taking 8.2 million euros on a 1.8-million-euro budget (Comas, 2010, p. 515; Ruíz, 2011). This kind of success means it is usually discussed in the context of the Spanish and Catalan 'horror boom' of the 2000's, as explored by, Benavente and Salvadó Corretger (2011), Comas (2010), Olney (2014), Quintana (2014), and Schlegel (2015). The fact that it is the only horror franchise to come out of Spain and was remade shot-for-shot in the USA confirms the global appeal. Aldana Reyes points out that *Quarantine* (Dowdle, 2008), the US remake 'abandoned the spiritual/possession element' signalling, 'that this part of the plot did not seem crucial to the spirit of the film' (Aldana Reyes, 2015, p. 159). That element of the plot is a crucial part of the culturally specific reading of the original, which

works to support the idea that cultural specificity is a large part of successful horror but does not always translate.

In contextual terms, the fact that Julio Fernández was executive producer on *Quarantine*, suggests that *[·REC]* provides an example not of Hollywood participating in the production sector of small cinemas as addressed in the literature review with reference to Hjort and Petrie, but also a small cinema participating in the production sector of Hollywood. As a whole the *[·REC]* series can therefore be seen as demonstrating the shifting regional, national, state and transnational frameworks within which Catalan cinema operates at contextual and textiual levels. *[·REC]* was a Catalan production that engaged with international developments in horror aesthetics but which also located the action, and themes, within a Spanish and Catalan culturally specific context through setting and languages. When remade by the same executive producers in the USA, this specificity was removed, demonstrating that the first three *[·REC]* films offer an example of the complexities of cultural specificity and global in what can be understood as Catalan or Spanish horror cinema.

Conclusion

This thesis began by acknowledging that as the cinema of a stateless nation, Catalan cinema has an inherently complex relationship with the concept of national cinema. However, textual and contextual changes that occurred as of the turn of the millennium signified an increase in this complexity. There was a renewal of themes and aesthetics, especially in documentary, and the attitude towards what Catalan cinema should be, as well as a renewed interest in cinema as a cultural industry from the *Generalitat* marked a clear distinction between Catalan cinema of the twentieth century, and Catalan cinema of the twenty-first century. Catalan cinema of the twenty-first century is characterised by an increasingly complex relationship to ideas of national cinema., whilst at the same time consolidating its identity as 'something like a national cinema' (D'Lugo, 2002, p. 165). Many of these changes predicated and sustained a boom in production and exhibition, which led to increased critical and commercial success, signs of a developing domestic audience, and increased international visibility. This renewal of Catalan cinema's identity, suggested that Catalan cinema in the 2000s can be characterised as 'New Catalan Cinema'.

In observing that New Catalan Cinema exists within a contextual framework that cuts across regional, national, international borders, and covers different genres and modes of filmmaking, it was established that studying Catalan cinema through a national cinemas framework would necessarily involve a consideration of more than just its inherent complexities. Therefore, this thesis set out to provide a nuanced account of New Catalan Cinema and its position within these overlapping and shifting frameworks.

Chapter one demonstrated that the presence of Catalan cinema, as well Basque and Galician cinemas, is often used to problematise the concept of a homogenous Spanish national cinema. It also revealed that this affects the study of Spanish cinema in two different ways. The first is to use 'Spanish cinema' as a term signifying a plurinational

cinema; a collection of different national cinemas within one nation state. This idea is most evident in Berthier and Seguin (2007), Smith (2003), Jordan (Jordan, 2000) , Labanyi and Pavlović (Labanyi and Pavlović, 2013). There are also those who do not engage directly with the concept of national cinema, but who make effort to pluralise their accounts of Spanish cinema, such as in the recent book from Wheeler and Canet (2014). The second, less common, reaction is to designate the term 'Spanish cinema' only to that which is made outside of the historical nationalities, i.e in the parts of Spain that are less problematically tied to the Castilian language and culture. This can be seen mostly in Triana-Toribio's *Spanish National Cinema* (2003). The second approach focuses solely on what can be understood as the dominant Spanish cinema. This demonstrated that neither approach allowed for the proper discussion of Catalan cinema, and expanded upon Keown's observation that:

> […] the Catalan experience can find its way into mainstream deliberation only to disappear from view at other moments of equal significance. Elsewhere it seems to hang like an appendage which, despite the accuracy of the study, seems to be attached almost as an afterthought, vaguely confluent with the central thrust of the argument.
>
> (Keown, 2011, p. 1)

Chapter one also demonstrated that although the concept of national cinema may have lost currency in light of concepts of transnational cinema, in the 2000s 'the national is more pertinent than ever in minority nations' (Bergfelder, 2005). It suggested that the concept of national cinema is still relevant, especially in the study of small cinemas or those which belong to stateless nations. However, any study of national cinemas would have to be careful not to 'obscure the degree of cultural diversity, exchange and interpretation that marks so much cinematic activity' (Higson, 2000, p. 16). As Hjort and Petrie pointed out, facilitated 'the international division of cultural labour can have the effect of boosting the international status and visibility of small players' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 9). The synonymy between national cinema and nation state has been brought into question by

Jarvie (2000) and Hayward (2000) among others and the chapter showed that some reconceptualisations of national cinema have sought to create space for the cinemas of stateless nations. Hjort and Petrie describe the cinemas of 'sub-national entities with a significant degree of self-determination' (Hjort and Petrie, 2007, p. 5). However, this thesis suggested that Catalan cinema would be better described as that of a sub-state nation with a significant degree of self-determination. Crofts also sought to create space for the discussion of national cinemas that do not belong to nation states. However, his category, 'regional or national cinemas whose culture and/or language take their distance from the nation states which enclose them' recalls the Barcelona/Madrid dichotomy, in which Barcelona is viewed as the centre of art cinema and Madrid as the centre of genre cinema (Crofts, 2006, p. 44). The thesis argued that this approach obscures a large part of production in both places, but most relevant to this research is the genre production which it obscures in the Barcelona film industry.

Ultimately, the literature review revealed that discussions of New Catalan Cinema tend to fall short of approaching New Catalan Cinema as a whole, and of addressing its complexities as a regional and national cinema in a globalised context. So, rather than framing New Catalan Cinema as that which takes its distance from Spanish cinema, and therefore only focusing on art or documentary modes, it was more appropriate to consider the implications of this added complexity when examining films of the key modes of filmmaking; documentary, historical drama and horror. This thesis found that, like Spanish cinema, Catalan cinema is both internally fragmented and globalised because of the ability to understand aspects of cinematic output as barceloní and others as global.

The thesis has been careful to incorporate a consideration of both aspects through exploring *cinema barceloní* in chapter four, an identifiably Catalan cinema in chapter five, and the manifestation of Catalan and Spanish cinemas in international modes of filmmaking in chapter six. Lastly, the methodology drew upon Berry and Farquhar's call

for ‘the abandonment of the national cinemas approach and its replacement with a larger analytic framework of cinema and the national’ (Berry and Farquhar, 2006, p. 5). Chapter two made sure that due attention was given to examining the complex frameworks within which New Catalan Cinema operates, thus contextualising the discussion of the films. One the general approach and structure was established based on the findings of the literature review, some research questions were designed to drive forward this investigation of New Catalan Cinema as a regional and national cinema within a globalised context, with all of the complexities that this involves.

- What facilitated the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, and how has it developed since then?
- What are the textual and contextual features of the New Catalan Cinema?
- How does the Catalan language feature in the New Catalan Cinema?
- What are the implications of a revised understanding of New Catalan Cinema for a broader understanding of notions of film cultures?

What facilitated the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema, and how has it developed since then?

This thesis has demonstrated that New Catalan Cinema can generally be understood as that which occurs after 1998 when new transnational models of production in documentary and horror revitalised those productions sectors, followed by changes in audiovisual policy that saw an increase in production in all genres and signs of an identifiably Catalan cinema, especially in historical drama.

Chapter two explored the debate over whether cinema should be classed as culture or economy that played out in the 1980s and 1990s and led to a change in Spanish audio-visual policies which began to favour the economic definition; namely the ‘Ley Alborch’ that changed the advanced subsidy system that characterised Spanish cinema (and

therefore also Catalan cinema) in the 1980s to a system based on automatic subsidies based on box office receipts. This was said to have had a negative impact on Catalan-language cinema because there was, and is, only a very small audience for Catalan-language cinema. The number of annual productions in Catalonia was low throughout the 1990s. The *Generalitat,* pursuing the ideal of a Catalan-language cinema in line with the objective of achieving a Catalan Communicative Space, but simultaneously aware that Catalan audience preferences were for Hollywood imports, attempted to raise dubbing quotas in the 1998 'Llei de política lingüística'. Chapter two found that the *Primer cicle de cinema català*, was a significant marker of the beginning of New Catalan Cinema because at those talks, many united around the idea that in order to one day have an autochthonous Catalan-language cinema, the language issue would have to be put to one side in order to first strengthen the industry. This was seen to have characterised the renewal of attitudes in the *Generalitat* towards Catalan cinema as that which is made in Catalonia rather than that which is in the Catalan language.

As chapters three and six found, at the same time that the attitude towards the definition of Catalan cinema was changing, there were developments in the documentary and horror modes of filmmaking. Chapter three explored documentary at the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema and found that Jordi Balló and the Pompeu Fabra University were developing new methods of audio-visual education and production. Born out of an opposition to the fact that documentary had been resigned to television formats, the Masters and Documentary brought in established filmmakers Jean Luis Comolli, Joaquim Jordà and José Luis Guerín to make three films with the students that would be financed by local and European television channels. The products of this experiment were *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista* (Comolli, 1999) *Mones com la Becky* (Jordà, 1999) and *En construcción* (Guerín, 2001), which mark the beginning of the new documentary school.

Chapter six found that the Fantastic Factory project was international in production and reception, and provided a training opportunity for the many professionals who were beginning to fill the sector. Fantastic Factory was found to be an example of Spain's autonomous regions 'bypassing the state by aligning with world markets' (Labanyi and Pavlovic, 2013, p. 3). This thesis found that it was after the creative documentaries had started to gain international attention and the Fantastic Factory productions had demonstrated the benefits of international co-production that Catalan audio-visual policy began to change. The success and international trajectory of these documentaries and genre productions in which the Catalan language was not a priority demonstrates the argument of those at the *Primer cicle de cinema català* in Sabadell; that Catalan cinema could be strengthened if the language were left out of the equation.

The subsequent changes suggest that policy not only informs filmmaking, but that filmmaking can also inform policy. The *Llibre blanc de les industries culturals* identified that the Catalan audio-visual sector needed to attract private investment, work with the city council to make Barcelona a centre for audio-visual production and training, to engage with the Spanish sector (Crameri, 2008, pp. 121–124). What followed was a period of considerable investment in infrastructure, as well as the setting up of the Barcelona and Catalonia Film Commissions, the Catalan Film Academy, and the accompanying Gaudí Awards. Between 2004 and 2010 the Catalan and Spanish governments were both Socialist and both were focused on regenerating the Spanish film industry/ies. Alongside financial support for audio-visual sector, there were also increased funds for Catalan-language film from both the *Generalitat* and the Spanish government. However, the thesis found that the political synchronicity between Spain and Catalonia would not last beyond 2010, when amendments to the Catalan Statute of Autonomy were reversed and both governments reverted to centre-right nationalist parties. This would mark the beginning of the politicisation of the, previously social, movement for the 'right to decide' about

independence in Catalonia, which continues at the time of writing. By this time, Barcelona was recognised as a centre of audio-visual production and the Film Academy represents a coherence to Catalan cinema that suggests a local cinema thinking and acting like the cinema of a nation state. That the Academy intervenes in audio-visual policymaking and pushed for the Catalan government to start collecting taxes to put towards the sector demonstrates as much.

In summary, chapter two found that the development of New Catalan Cinema has been shaped by moments of convergence and divergence between policymakers and filmmakers, as well as between Catalan and Spanish audio-visual policies. Chapter three found that the new documentary was born out of opposition, but not to Spanish cinema. Rather, to the way the documentary mode was perceived to have gone stale, relegated to informative programming on television. Chapter six found that the renewal of the horror filmmaking was born partly out of a transnational alliance, and partly in response to developments in Spanish cinema. Chapter five found that historical drama was renewed at a time when Catalan and Spanish audio-visual policies both favoured Catalan-language commercial cinema, and when the construction of historical memory was a major preoccupation in both places. By the time the economic crisis impacted upon the audio-visual industry, the industrial infrastructure and institutional framework was in place.

Further research on the beginning and development of New Catalan Cinema would examine the role of film festivals in the maintenance of a Catalan film culture. Given that the largest festivals are devoted to fantasy (Sitges International Film Festival) and documentary (Barcelona Docs), this would necessarily involve taking a similar approach to this thesis of examining Catalan cinema as a group of distinct modes of filmmaking and genres that operate within a complex constellation of regional, national and transnational networks.

What are the textual and contextual features of the New Catalan Cinema?

This thesis has explored key modes of filmmaking in the New Catalan Cinema and through an even amount of attention to documentary and genre cinema in relation to the ideas of New Catalan Cinema, it has revealed that the term 'Catalan cinema' is more complex than it first appears when examining both text and context. Building on Torreiro's point that the creative documentaries of New Catalan Cinema should really be called *cinema barceloní* this thesis has incorporated the notion that Catalan and Barcelonan cinema are not always one and the same into the structure of the thesis, and the textual and contextual analysis (Torreiro, 2010, p. 45). The thesis also incorporates Comas' observation that it is difficult to arrive at a hypothetical definition of the identity of Catalan cinema because 'first of all, it would be necessary to define the identity of Catalan society, which is increasingly changed, multicultural, and dependent on outside factors' (Comas, 2010, p. 24). Thus, rather than attempting to define any unifying characteristics of a Catalan cinema, this thesis examined three identities that Catalan cinema is perceived to have and examined films from the Barcelonan, Catalan, and transnational perspectives.

Chapter three examined not only the role of documentary in the beginning of the New Catalan Cinema but also demonstrated the three different approaches that *Buenaventura Durrutti, anarquista*, *Mones com la Becky* and *En construcción* on the Masters in Creative Documentary took to exploring the spaces in between documentary and fiction filmmaking. In doing so, chapter three contributed to answering the first and second research questions, and provided necessary background information for the textual analysis of flims in chapter four.

Chapter four took Torriero's point about internal fragmentation as a starting point from which to explore ideas of a Barcelonan cinema, whilst also examining the development of the creative documentary aesthetic in relation to this theme. It found that the aesthetics

associated with the Jordà and Guerín 'schools' have been developed upon significantly, resulting in two critically and commercially successful creative documentaries in which their differing approaches to the space between fiction and documentary is central to their critical success; *Ciutat morta* and *La plaga*. The chapter revealed that because of their aesthetic, they take very different approaches to the theme of 'the city and transformations', that was identified by Torreiro as a major theme in Catalan creative documentaries (Torreiro, 2010, p. 54). It showed that *Ciutat morta* develops the politically reflexive mode of documentary filmmaking and, by incorporating the tone and mood of noir, emphasises themes of; corruption ingrained in urban redevelopment, institutionalised prejudice, and the negative effects that this has on the inhabitants of the city. *La plaga* was shown to develop the observational and poetic approach of Guerín and his specific incorporation of devices from fiction filmmaking.

Further investigation into the concept of a Barcelonan cinema would contrast the documentary mode with genre films that offer a more touristic gaze upon the city. An investigation such as this would be tied to ideas of film, space, and place in relation to city cinemas and would involve examining the romantic comedies and melodramas set in Barcelona that are watched largely by a domestic Catalan audience such as *Barcelona, nit d'estiu* (*Barcelona, Summer Night*) and *Any de Gràcia* (*Year of Grace*) (Pons, 2011). Further contrasting those two modes with films about Barcelona aimed at an international audience, such as *Vicky Cristina Barcelona,* and *Biutiful* would be the logical next step for pursuing lines of investigation related to Barcelonan Cinema, and would maintain the complex approach used in this thesis to approach the crossover between local, national, state and transnational cinemas.

Chapter five approached films that are more recognisable as a Catalan national cinema, and which, as the chapter demonstrated, can be seen to perform a nation building function by reflecting upon significant moments of resistance in Catalonia's history (and mythology) at

a time when the nation is once again in a position of resistance. The films in chapter five were therefore discussed as part of the process of construction of historical memory in Catalonia that was occurring in the 2000s in the context of the recuperation of historical memory and democratic memory; as they contributed to constructing 'a selective representation of its own imagined past' (Boyd, 2008, p. 134). As demands for more autonomy became demands for independence and therefore nationhood in the traditional sense; as linked to statehood, the films of chapter five were shown to link narratives of resistance to the present, and in doing so, construct Catalan national heroes, which Crameri writes is a feature of the contemporary movement in all forms of politics and culture (Crameri, 2014). However, they all took different approaches and *Pa negre* was seen to offer a metahistorical reflection upon contemporary constructions of Catalan historical memory. That it was so successful in Catalonia, Spain and to a certain extent, abroad, was shown to be down to the mode of address, which marked it out as a recognisable example of Catalan national cinema that nonetheless, could still circulate as Spanish.

Further research on historical memory in Catalan national cinema would necessarily examine other modes of filmmaking, linking it to work already being done on the topic such as Martí Olivella's investigation of three documentaries that offer a more critical approach to history and memory (Martí Olivella, 2013). This would enrich the existing research and provide balance to the topic which is currently mostly focussed on documentary. In doing so, this would carry forward the general point that New Catalan Cinema is more than just creative documentary.

Chapter six discussed cultural specificity and global appeal in the *[·REC]* series and demonstrated that New Catalan Cinema is not just about Barcelona or Catalonia, but also Spain. The use of an international found footage horror aesthetic was also found to be more than just a way of engaging with international horror but also a functions to set up the culturally specific readings that can be understood as Spanish or Catalan depending on the

film and, like in *Bruc; la llegenda*, the position of the viewer. The *[·REC]* series, understood as an extension of the Fantastic Factory project, being an example of global appeal, Spanish and Catalan cultural specificity is also present in the first three to different degrees.Chapter six also demonstrated that the balance of domestic and international success depends on the right balance of cultural specificity and global appeal. That the *[·REC]* series is usually seen as Spanish horror also demonstrates that of much Catalan cinema also has a Spanish identity, especially when marketed abroad. This can work in favour of the film.

The films discussed can be understood as Barcelonan, Catalan, Spanish or Transnational. Chapters three and four demonstrated that Creative documentaries were part of international boom in documentary filmmaking and the influences of these filmmakers are drawn from all over the world, especially Europe. Chapter six showed that horror was also part of an international resurgence of the genre, and that the influences of these filmmakers are also drawn from far and wide, especially the USA. In terms of exhibition and reception, both documentary and horror travel internationally, whereas the films in chapter five tended to travel only within Spain, even though this meant being subjected to dubbing in some cases. Together therefore, the films here demonstrated the complexity of textual and contextual readings of some of the key modes in New Catalan Cinema, and have developed upon the observations of others in more detail.

> Considered together, these films tell the story of a new Catalan cinematic idiom, conceived of as a micro-cinema, whose existence on the global screen seems to depend on its capacity to recreate Catalan culture's own in-between and transnational location.
>
> (Martí Olivella, 2011, p. 203)

How does the Catalan language feature in the New Catalan Cinema?

One might expect that any film seeking to engage with Catalan identity in film would use the language, but as this thesis has found, this is not necessarily the case. All films in this thesis feature at least two languages, often more, and all can be read as Catalan in some way. Catalonia is bilingual and so multilingualism is a tool for linguistic verisimilitude. In *El coronel Macià,* characters such as generals in the Spanish Army speak Castilian, as they would have. If they were to speak Catalan it would create a rather odd effect. Bilingualism can also add depth to character portrayals, as is seen in *13 dies d'octubre*. However, as a result of the complicated presence of the Catalan language on screen, the Catalan language must sometimes be erased from films in order for them to reach a wider audience. This was demonstrated in chapter five with particular reference to the Castilian dubbed version of *Bruc; la llegenda,* where the traces of Catalan left by the presence of multiple languages in the original version offer what Brad Epps might call and 'echo' or a 'trace' of the film's identity as Catalan (Epps, 2012).. Alternatively, the presence of the Catalan language in films marketed as Spanish such as *[·REC]* and *[·REC]³ Genesis* complicates their categorisation as straightforward examples of Spanish films. In the culturally specific readings, language works to address the metaphors at a Catalan-speaking audience. Barcelona is a global city, so as well as its official bilingual status, other languages are often heard, as was demonstrated in discussions of documentary and *La plaga*.

There may be a desire for linguistic verisimilitude rather than a Catalan language cinema among the majority of filmmakers, but as chapter two demonstrated; this is not a unanimous opinion, and subsidies for Catalan-language productions from the *Generalitat* continue after audio-visual and linguistic policy had their trial separation. Furthermore, the debate over whether or not Catalan cinema should be in Catalan characterised the beginning and development of New Catalan Cinema, and is ongoing. That there are two awards for 'Best Film' at the Gaudí Awards, one for Catalan-language cinema and one for non-Catalan language cinema is an example of just how ingrained multilingualism is in

Catalan film culture. However, it also demonstrates the continued desire to work towards a Catalan language cinema, even if Catalan language films are almost always bilingual. In Catalonia, as in other European countries, the vast majority of cinema ticket sales go to Hollywood imports. Chapter two demonstrated that pursuing a Catalan-language cinema has, on at least two occasions, meant pursuing Catalan-language dubbing quotas. It showed that although this may have been popular with the public, who want Catalan-language cinema but don't tend to watch Catalan films, it was deeply unpopular with the production and exhibition sectors, revealing the various different opinions on the place of the Catalan language in cinema.

Despite these points, and although language has featured quite centrally in the analysis of some films, this research was not conducted from a linguistic perspective. Therefore, further investigations into how multilingualism features in New Catalan Cinema's complex identity would shed more light on the significance of multilingualism for New Catalan Cinema as a whole.

What are the implications of a revised understanding of New Catalan Cinema for a broader understanding of notions of film cultures?

This question offers an opportunity to make some concluding remarks about the possible impact of this thesis on wider film studies. First of all, the thesis has demonstrated the complexities involved in attempting to use a framework of cinema and the national to study the cinema of a stateless nation with a distinct language to that of the state to which it belongs. Catalonia may have a significant amount of autonomy from the Spanish central government, especially in areas of language and culture, but it nevertheless operates within overlapping and shifting markets and structures of government. At times, these structures can work in the favour of filmmakers based in Catalonia, as they can access multiple sources of funding from the *Generalitat*, the Spanish government, and all of the

transnational networks that Spain is part of such as MEDIA. At other times, such as in 1998 and 2010, the disjuncture between different structures of government and the filmmaking community can produce heated debate.

The literature review revealed that Catalan cinema has been discussed as 'regional cinema' by Kinder and other, a 'sub-national cinema' by Jordan and others, and 'something like a national cinema' by D'Lugo. This thesis shows that it is also a transnational cinema, and that the transnational aspect has been intrinsic to the growth and consolidation of New Catalan Cinema's identity. The aim of thesis was not to determine whether New Catalan Cinema is or is not a national cinema. Rather, it was to examine the various dimensions of New Catalan Cinema as that which is both local and national, regional and global, depending on the film and the approach taken to studying it. As such, the thesis has revealed that New Catalan Cinema can be studied as a national cinema, but must take into account the added complexities that its geopolitical position creates. The debates that characterise national cinema studies also characterise Catalan Cinema; especially the culture/economy dichotomy, and the impact of transnationalism on the national cinema. However, the specificities of New Catalan Cinema mean that these debates take on a different meaning and manifest in more immediate issues. The culture/economy debate manifests in the debates over how to promote the Catalan language in cinema. The impact of transnationalism is less about how to protect the national cinema, but more about how it can help to consolidate the industry and project the national cinema abroad, bypassing the state.

In studying the history and characteristics of New Catalan Cinema, this thesis ultimately demonstrates the complex nature of interactions between the national, the sub-national, the regional and the transnational operating within this particular film culture. In doing so, this thesis also demonstrates that the New Catalan Cinema challenges pre-existing critical conceptualisations of both national and regional film cultures. The implication this has for

our understanding of such film cultures derives primarily from the fact that New Catalan Cinema clearly does not fit easily into any of the existing concepts designed for the study of small cinemas or the cinemas of nations without states. In other words, the understanding of New Catalan Cinema as a simultaneously local, regional, national, and transnational cinema points us towards a more context-based and multi-faceted approach to developing our understanding not just of the cinemas of stateless nations but also of national or transnational cinemas as well.

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